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HORACE GRANTHAM;

OR,

THE NEGLECTED SON.

BY

CHARLES HORROCKS, ESQ.

LATE CAPTAIN H.M. 15TH REGIMENT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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9 July 52 J.B.M.

D E D I C A T I O N.

MADAM,

Having received the gracious permission to dedicate the following pages to your Imperial Highness, it behoves me to avail myself, with the most profound respect, of this opportunity, to offer my most grateful thanks, not only for the honour thus conferred upon me, but also for the uniform kindness, the considerate and condescending solicitude, with which myself, and other members of my family, have been treated by your Imperial Highness for many years.

The happiest periods of my life have been spent at Weimar, which place, indeed, cannot be mentioned, or thought of, without an involuntary reference to your Imperial Highness's long residence there; beloved and respected by your subjects, as well as by those, who, strangers like myself, have ample cause to testify their humble acknowledgments of the gracious reception they have invariably met with at your Court.

Gen. des Ray. 29th 51 Birch 30-

All however are not equally fortunate. Many who read this Dedication will heartily respond to my sentiments, but to me is reserved the privilege of expressing them ; and the hope of this it was, which prompted my desire to dedicate the first effort of my pen to your Imperial Highness, as a humble tribute, both of my respect and gratitude. Connected as I am with Weimar, by a tie which never can be broken, your Imperial Highness's condescension to me on this occasion affords me the greatest satisfaction, as it adds another link to the chain, which so effectually binds my sympathies to the place.

With a most earnest wish for your Imperial Highness's welfare and happiness, I have the honour to subscribe myself, Madam,

Your Imperial Highness's

Devoted servant,

CHARLES HORROCKS,

(Late Capt. H. M. 15th Regt.)

To Her Imperial Highness,

MARIE PAVLOVNA,

Grand Duchess of Saxe, and

Russia.

Weimar, December, 1851.

P R E F A C E.

Impressed, as I have long deeply been, with the conviction, that not only the follies, dissipation and recklessness; but also the vices which characterize the Youth of the present day, are mainly brought about by the bad example, the total want of feeling, or fashionable indifference of their Parents, I have endeavoured, in the following pages, to trace the all but fatal effects of such conduct, on a young man of a sensitive and honourable nature, who, pining for sympathy and understood by none, most fortunately for himself, at the very moment when, like many others, his Destiny for Good or Evil, Virtue or Vice, was to be decided for ever, meets with one, who *sees and understands*, who *stretches forth his hand and saves!*

There are exceptions to every rule; consequently, it is scarcely necessary for me to remark, that, no doubt, there are cases of natural or unnatural depravity, where all Affection is thrown away, all Precept,

may, all Example, is entirely lost. Yet I firmly believe such to be "few and far between;" that a close observer of human nature, of social life, one who would fain analyze the mysterious and accursed, yet often plausible system, of which Society is composed; must be impressed with the conviction, that, as "Ye cannot worship God and Mammon," neither can ye expect the affection, though for a certain period ye can enforce the obedience, of Children, who have been neglected for Self, who have been set aside on frivolous excuses, and left to battle with the World, uncared for and alone.

As a pleasing contrast to this melancholy picture, I have derived great delight in portraying the characters that compose Mr. Cecil's family, where Virtue, and consequently Happiness—let Philosophers reason as they will—go hand in hand, where selfishness, worldliness, and pride, are made subservient to natural affection, duty and benevolence.

C. H.

ERRATA.

VOL. I.

Page	4,	line	11,	<i>dele</i>	"morning."
"	25,	"	2,	for "mechanic "	<i>read</i> "mechanician."
"	25,	"	11,	for "dreadful dreary "	<i>read</i> "miserable."
"	72,	"	18,	<i>dele</i>	"was."
"	84,	"	13,	<i>dele</i>	"having."
"	113,	"	15,	for "limited "	<i>read</i> "varied."
"	133,	"	5,	after "has "	<i>insert</i> "ever."
"	136,	"	8,	for "affliction "	<i>read</i> "annoyance."
"	139,	"	5,	for "it is, I admit, as in "	<i>read</i> "I blush."
"	143,	"	9,	before "I was "	<i>insert</i> "yet."

HORACE GRANTHAM.



CHAPTER I.

“ HORACE, what did I say to you the other day about your grandfather? ”

These words were addressed by a handsome, fashionable-looking man of about fifty years of age, who had just entered the breakfast-room of a newly furnished *recherché* mansion at the west-end of London, to his only son, who, with his back to the fire, was evidently meditating an attack upon a delicious ham on the well-stocked sideboard.

However, the ominous, half pleased, half anxious tone of voice in which his father spoke, changed the current of the young man's thoughts quickly, for he turned and, looking him directly in the face, replied, "I do not recollect, sir; has any thing happened?"

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Grantham "something has happened, but what did I say? Horace, what did I say?"

"Why sir," said Horace, "as I conclude from your mentioning my grandfather, you now allude to him, I recollect your remarking that you were sure he could not live long, though in perfect health. I sincerely hope that no mishap has befallen the old gentleman."

"Horace," replied his father, who could not (man of the world as he was, in the strictest sense of the word) conceal his satisfaction, even on so solemn an occasion, "I said the old man could not have long to live, and I knew it—here is the letter—your grandfather is dead—apoplexy. I am certain you are now a far richer man than

myself, and I wish you joy! You must be off to Scotland by to-night's train to attend the funeral. I shall be most anxious to hear from you."

The intelligence thus suddenly communicated to Horace Grantham was totally unexpected by him, and was of startling import—both father and son had reason to believe that Horace would succeed to the reputed enormous wealth of his grandfather, Mr. Macgregor, now no more. To the worldly father (who cared no more for Horace than for his groom, or less) the prospect of his now splendid position, greatly increased his son's value in his estimation. As to Horace, the news was so unexpected that he could scarcely understand it.

At this moment, a richly-dressed, fashionable, but by no means elegant looking female, entered the room. She seemed about thirty years of age, and was rather comely in appearance. An eternal smile lit up her features, and, to judge by her *toute ensemble*, one would have said—"that

woman never knew misfortune," and it will not be her fault if she ever does. She was accompanied by a terrier of the pure Scotch breed, who seemed quite as jolly as herself. Indeed, this *entrée* was all that the butler seemed waiting for—as in this well-regulated establishment all moved like clock-work. That domestic followed with breakfast; the lady made her morning salutation to the two gentlemen, her husband and stepson, and all three sat down to the morning repast.

The conversation, which had been thus interrupted, was now resumed.

"Have you any letters Mr. Grantham, this morning?" said the lady, with the tone of a person, who, thinking it necessary to say something, does so, but evidently with no interest as to the reply.

"I have," replied her husband, who, though a man of the most violent temper, was, this morning, highly pleased—firstly, with his own ingenuity in having foretold Mr. Macgregor's demise; and, secondly, at

the prospect of his having his son now entirely off his hands —“Just guess, Mrs. Grantham.” “Guess,” replied his wife, laughing, “I never could guess anything—Horace, your father is in one of his tantalizing humours—what *news* is this?” Oh! that word “news,” how dear it is to all, but particularly so to the idle, the frivolous, and the little minded; of which class the jolly lady of thirty was a fair specimen—*news*, of how many descriptions, of what various sorts, with what different feelings do different people expect and look for news! What is “great news” to some, is none to others; small talk to some, is great talk to others; and, if we look closely, we shall find that both “news and talk” have their relative value, according to the people who receive the one, and make use of the other.

“Oh, Adelaide,” said Horace, who smiled at his step-mother, we suppose because he could not resist her really pleasant-looking face, “has not my father told you that I am now no longer the ‘poor ex-Captain,’ the

man of ways and means? The metamorphosis is supposed to be as complete as any in the Arabian Nights. I see you are all anxiety. My father tells me that Mr. Macgregor is dead—poor old gentleman, he was kind to me when I was a boy—but everybody *is* kind to boys.”

Horace here stopped abruptly, for he felt he had spoken inadvertently a “jarring word.” He saw his father frown, and he knew the cause. Does the reader know? If not, let us explain:—Mr. Grantham *had* never been kind to his boy, fine, and noble a boy as he had been. Both father and son KNEW this—the latter FELT it. The former could not feel, therefore, any allusion to feeling annoyed him, which is always the case with such people.

“Yes,” resumed Horace, after a pause, “I suppose, Adelaide, I shall now have no difficulty in getting to Almack’s, or the Duke’s, or the Honourables of all grades. I suppose £5,000 a year will be enough for me, or will it be £10,000?”

“My dear Horace,” said his step-mother, now fairly roused from her trance, “I declare I am quite happy—how very unexpected! It is the most fortunate thing I ever heard of.”

Let not our readers suppose that the lady meant anything unfeeling by this speech. In fact, she intended to show her good feeling—and, as far as it went, it was good feeling to Horace, whom she liked, because he was a more suitable and agreeable companion to her than her husband, who was twenty-two years older than herself, and seldom agreeable to any one.

“Mrs. Grantham,” said her husband, who was now deep in the “Times,” and seemed to have lost all interest in his son, if indeed he ever had any—“I wish you would not talk so loud, I dare say Horace and myself can manage everything without *your* advice or interference.”

“Indeed,” said the smiling lady, who never allowed Mr. Grantham to put her out in the least, “you seem not to be much

pleased at Horace's good fortune." She then laughed heartily, which made things look blacker still.

Horace now, as indeed he was often called upon to do, interposed ; asked his father's advice as to his journey, &c., and it was finally agreed that he should proceed to Scotland by the mail train that night. He accordingly went out immediately to make his arrangements, leaving his father and his young wife, for such she was to him, to the full enjoyment of themselves and their luxurious mansion.

CHAPTER II.

DESCRIPTIONS, explanations, &c. of the *dramatis personæ* are “stale, flat, and unprofitable,” but necessary to the author and the reader, which is of more importance.

Mr. and Mrs. Grantham, whom we introduced in the last chapter, had been married about three years—he, at the sober age of forty-eight, having deemed it prudent again to enter the connubial state—his first wife, a Miss MacGregor, having been dead twenty-five years. Mr. Grantham’s career had been somewhat singular. Left an orphan at fifteen years of age, he had succeeded at

eighteen, according to his father's will, to an immense fortune, obtained solely by manufactures. His guardians were ignorant people, who attended far more to his gratification than his education; and at nineteen, he absolutely, and not unnaturally, fell in love with the beautiful Miss MacGregor, the daughter of a rich gentleman in business at Glasgow. Such a match seemed most desirable to all parties—the guardians were consulted together, and gave their ready consent. Miss MacGregor loved with ardour, and the happy pair were united at happy nineteen, just as if they had done with the world at that giddy age, though in reality neither of them had either tasted its sweets, or experienced the disappointments which a better knowledge of it is sure to give.

How this marriage would have turned out let philosophers judge; we cannot say, for it was of short duration. Poor Mrs. Grantham died of a consumption two years after their marriage, at their castle in Inverness-shire, leaving one son—Horace Grantham—

to the tender mercies of a father of twenty-one years of age, without education, knowledge, friends, or experience ; in fact, without anything except "money," which, of course, he considered the "one thing needful."

Mr. Grantham, therefore, removed to London, and commenced the life of a gay, though not dissipated, young man; he travelled, hunted, shot, and devoted all his talents, which were not great, to pushing himself, the son of a manufacturer, into good society. This task was difficult, and Mr. Grantham had, as might have been expected, to experience all those slights and mortifications which people in similar circumstances are sure to meet with. He partially succeeded: his money helped him much; alas! *it will do it!* His youth and good looks also did something. At last, his dinners became known as *recherché*, his hunters as the best going, and his castle in Scotland as the most agreeable resort possible in August.

There was some talk of a previous mar-

riage, and a son somewhere. Also in Scotland at the old castle, people often inquired who was the original of the lovely female portrait in white satin, in the dining-room. All this was past. Nothing remained but the lovely boy, Horace, who settled first at one boarding-school and then at another, at last found his way to Eton, without in his whole life having even heard a kind expression from a relation, or received a paternal kiss, or word of advice in season.

Let people think as they may, let them wonder as they will,—so it was. Mr. Grantham thought—though for the sake of humanity, we trust our readers do not—that he was “doing his duty” by sending his son to the fashionable schools, and occasionally driving down, first to Blackheath and then to Eton, to see him. Home, that word so sacred, so dear to most boys, Horace Grantham never knew. In the holidays, he was put off on some old aunts who lived in London, and doated on him—

but were not the sort of people either to improve him, or to satisfy his father, who always called them "the old women," and never visited them except when Horace was there.

Thus left to himself—the boy grew apace, a child alone. Mr. Grantham assisted by his newly-acquired friends, had managed to get rid of a great part of his once ample fortune. He therefore summoned his only son one day into his presence, and coolly informed him, that, instead of his being independent as he had once hoped to make him, his own fortune was seriously diminished, and it would be necessary for Horace to select a profession without delay.

The young man chose the army, and, having obtained a commission in a crack regiment, he spent three years in Canada. His father allowed him two hundred a year, and his grandfather, Mr. Macgregor—who was supposed to be enormously rich—paid his debts—though to no great amount, several times. Mr. Macgregor had no other

relation alive but his grandson, and although since his daughter's death, Mr. Grantham had quarrelled with the old gentleman, and not even visited him, Horace had often passed his holidays there, and was on very good, though not on affectionate, terms with his grandfather.

He was considered his undoubted heir, and although of late years there had been rumours of "speculations failing," "bad debts," &c., still the business went on, and, let the worst come to the worst, Horace was supposed to be certain to succeed to many thousands; under these circumstances, neither his father nor grandfather objected to his leaving the army, simply because, as he himself expressed it, he was tired of it. The fact was, that Horace, owing to his imperfect education, and the way in which he had been brought up, though possessed of first-rate talents, a kind heart, and acute feelings, was not "at home" with himself or the world. He was restless and unhappy, tired of the monotony of military duty,

though a gay enough companion at a jovial mess. He felt himself not suited to the life he led. He pined for he knew not what, and wished for constant change of scene. What he really wanted, poor fellow, were friendship, sympathy, affection, the honourable and confident intercourse with high minds, which many sigh for, and never obtain. Thus unstrung, he returned home, sold his commission, and arrived just in time to witness his father's second marriage to the fair lady of thirty already introduced.

This lady, the complete antipodes of Mr. Grantham's former wife, suited him infinitely better. Their pursuits were the same; all of this world—money, dress, society, were the gods they worshipped. They differed only in their tempers, Mr. Grantham's not being improved by his latterly having to retrench considerably, keeping only five hunters instead of ten, and also to sell the estates and castle in Scotland, which were not entailed—losing thirty thousand pounds by the transaction. Still, the ready money he

must have. Horace, he warned most paternally never to hope for a farthing from him while he lived, and as Mr. Grantham was only fifty-two, and had never had a day's illness in his life, while Horace was twenty-four, and not of a very strong constitution, it seemed not improbable that he would outlive his son.

Still, Horace's expectations from his grandfather were quite sufficient to put aside any alarm as to his ultimate pecuniary position. He therefore left the army, and spent two years in London and the country, where and how he could, not often at home, if home such could be called, where his father treated him as a common acquaintance, and his step-mother, though civil enough, had not the least degree of affection for him.

CHAPTER III.

HORACE had only visited his grandfather once since his return from Canada, on which occasion the old gentleman, who was a very eccentric character, had alluded in very harsh, though just, terms to the neglect with which the elder Mr. Grantham had thought fit to treat him for the last twenty-five years. In fact, he seemed to detest his former son-in-law quite as much as Mr. Grantham did him.

What a position for a child, and then for a young man, was that of Horace! The only idea of the ties and duties of relationship he

had ever imbibed were formed necessarily from the conduct of his own relatives, and it seemed that they all vied with each other in hatred and contempt of all natural affection and responsibility. When in Scotland, he had to listen to the old Mr. Macgregor's very coarse abuse of his father, whose conduct he felt he could not defend. When at home, one of Mr. Grantham's favourite topics was turning the "old Scot," as he termed his father-in-law, into ridicule.

Our young friend had been meditating a visit to his grandfather the very day before the letter arrived announcing his death; and, though his feelings on the occasion were not of a very painful nature, they led him for the first time to reflect on the uncertainty of life and its possessions. Horace was as yet but young, being only twenty-four: and, as it is certain that few men have thought deeply before that age, it is equally true that it does not follow because they *have* not, that they *will* not, or that the seemingly careless young fellow of twenty-

four may not eventually prove a philosopher and a great man.

We, however, claim nothing of the sort as yet for our hero, whose life had been to him a sort of dream, which he could neither explain nor understand. Being naturally of a rather reserved temperament, he had never sought society when with his regiment, and his father had not brought him at all forward in that in which he mixed for many reasons, but chiefly because it hurt his personal vanity, which was not slight, to have a son of Horace's age about with him, as it must have necessarily let his friends into the secret of his own.

It is, no doubt, in very bad taste to be personal, but let us say a few words in regard to Horace, while he is fast asleep in the mail train for Glasgow, as previously arranged, since he is to be our companion for many a journey yet—

“Robust, but not herculean to the sight,
No giant frame sets forth his common height.”

actively made and well proportioned, his features, and the shape of his head, bore that unmistakeable stamp of penetration, and latent thought, which characterize genius; while the soft expression of his eyes and well-formed mouth, denoted that the evil passions were not predominant in him, and that he was capable, nay formed by Nature, for the enjoyments of love and friendship. All these had been denied him; whatever qualities he possessed, for good or evil, were shut up within himself. He had erred, indeed, as most young men do, but his character had never in any way been developed, nor could his most intimate friend have guessed in what respect he chiefly excelled, or in what direction his tastes or thoughts travelled.

As to his knowledge of himself, it was, one can easily imagine, very limited, for as yet no occasion had necessitated much reflection, and his life had been peculiarly unsettled, to any attempts of such a nature. Although his education had been most im-

perfect, and his youth frittered away in that almost useless and unmeaning acquisition of Latin and Greek, which some Englishmen glory in, fortunately for him, he had an innate love of knowledge and reading, a retentive memory, and great powers of observation.

These had already been developed to good effect, as no man of his age could be more agreeable in society, or display a more general knowledge of things, and of the events of the day. He also had that rare quality which is denied to many men of far greater ability and genius, and which renders all their learning of little or no avail, namely, "a facility of expression, a happy method of imparting what he did know in agreeable language, and in conversation one could discern at a glance that he possessed both a quick perception, and was not likely to mistake the meaning of the person who addressed him."

His complexion was clear, though dark; his hair was black and curly, and he had no

whiskers to adorn his decidedly handsome and intelligent face.

He dressed like a well-bred Englishman, and his whole air and manner were those of the patrician, yet modest withal, and elegant without the slightest approach to effeminacy.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. MACGREGOR, Horace's grandfather, who had just paid the debt of nature, had lived for many years quite alone at a country seat about nine miles from Glasgow. Although, when at home, entirely secluded from society, apparently by his own choice, the old gentleman had been always seen once or twice a week in the busy haunts of men; on the Exchange, or driving from one musty counting-house to another, with that thoughtful or anxious look which the pursuit of wealth stamps on the countenance; he was pointed at as the rich

merchant — considered the fortunate possessor of thousands. Such was the fact; yet a more unhappy being, or a man more at variance with his species, never lived. His talents had been great, and his fortune entirely acquired by his own exertions in business. But, as is often the case, when amassed, it yielded no happiness, and he looked back on a life of toil and anxiety with disgust and vexation.

His domestic life had been unfortunate, and his old age solitary and chill. But habits of many years' formation could not be got rid of; and, although he nominally had retired from business, and left the concern to the management of his partner, Mr. Foster, who had been admitted about five years previously to a share, he was thus often seen lingering in his old haunts, superintending from custom those affairs which, in reality, he now cared nothing for.

His sudden death created a great stir on Change, and the *Glasgow Herald* devoted an entire column to a biography of their

great townsman. What was said, was true enough. He had been a chymist, a mechanic, and a member of the Royal Society in London, and consequently a learned man. All read the article, shook their heads, went to dinner, and it is a question whether the great man ever crossed the thoughts of these illustrious people again.

Horace was so little known in Scotland that many considered the old gentleman had died without an heir; those who were aware of his existence, thought it a pity so much money should go out of "business," and wondered what sort of a young man Horace was. Two people only were filled with anxiety for Horace's expected appearance, which had been duly notified to them. These were Mr. Foster and his son, a young man of about twenty years of age, who acted as principal clerk to his father in the countinghouse. Mr. Foster, or rather Foster, for he had been in reality a plain working man, who, by determined energy of purpose, and years of toil had

risen to his present position, was now the sole surviving, indeed the only, partner of the firm, and had attained by degrees the station he now occupied quietly, yet surely. For thirty-five or forty years never had this enterprising genius missed a day from his occupation on the tall dark stool in the murky depths of Mr. Macgregor's office.

Toil, unremitting toil, had been his portion, but he had his reward—he was now rich. He lived in the suburbs with his wife and son. He kept a carriage, had men-servants, and silver plate, and one would have thought all this was enough, but some persons are never satisfied in the pursuit of wealth. He still toiled on. At the age of sixty his heavy form, and sharp and cunning-looking features might be seen daily as he drove a sorry-looking horse and gig into the narrow lane, in which the office was situated. There was something so forbidding in his aspect that no child could look on him. He held no intercourse with men, save on business, then he was intel-

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ligent—nay, pleasant—for a moment; but the sunbeam quickly vanished, and the distrustful leer—the incredulous smile, again possessed his sallow countenance.

He was sometimes accompanied by his servant, but oftener by his son, James, who, although his father had endeavoured to make him follow in his steps, and look to money, gold, bills, and business, as the only things worthy of notice in life, had occasioned that worthy much disappointment by his devoted adherence to billiards, whisky, and all the low amusements so readily met with in the gay town of Glasgow. He was also—in his own ideas, at least—a lady's man, although so dreadfully vulgar, and brutally ill-mannered, that his success and operations were naturally confined to only a certain set. Still the elder Foster had insisted on his son's employing himself, and he was chief clerk in consequence, though owing to his dissipated habits, and irregular attendance, he would not have long remained

in the situation had any one but his father reigned supreme.

Old Foster had latterly acquired complete influence over Mr. Macgregor, who for years had looked upon him as the mainspring of the firm. His confidence was not misplaced; for Foster, in order to succeed himself, was obliged to do all in his power to contribute to the success of the senior partner.

For many years the house had, in consequence, been the most flourishing in Glasgow, and no one would have imagined, when Mr. Macgregor fêted two or three mercantile friends at his country-house, among whom was his partner, that that individual detested the man whom he smiled fawningly on, and looked forward anxiously to his death, as the only remaining bar to his supreme power. Yes! this wretched person, who owed every penny he had, his position and success in life, originally to Mr. Macgregor's kindness, who had picked him out of the streets, had him educated, and placed him in his office, now meditated

on his death with delight, and cursed the tedious years which elapsed before he could seize the promised spoil. To say that Foster had one redeeming point in his character would be untrue—and yet he passed for an honest man. Yes, an honest man! In business he *was* an honest man, because he knew that to be detected in dishonesty would have ruined him for ever. He was a charitable man, because it would never do for Mr. Foster's name not to be seen in connexion with the public charities. But for all this his *private* honesty, his *private* charity, alas, they had no existence.

The reader can guess with what feelings the Fosters, father and son, heard of the death of their patron, and supposed friend.

CHAPTER V.

THE abode of the Fosters was of that description which persons of their class usually occupy, when fortune has smiled on them and they wish to look grand. It was a square heavy-looking structure, not three miles from the town; moreover, the building itself, the trees, the iron railings which ran down the short drive that separated it from the high-road, nay, the very grass itself, were all begrimed and blackened with that thick coating of dust, or rather dirt, which covers everything half an inch deep in the neighbourhood of all manufac-

turing towns. The two solitary cows that grazed in the paddock behind the house were miserable looking animals. Here the merry laughter of childhood was never heard; the monotonous bark of the watch-dog, and the heavy grating of the wheels of Mr. Foster's gig, as he drove to, or returned from, business daily, being literally the only signs of life which broke the horrid stillness of this ghost-like mansion.

The blinds were usually all let down, and the grounds around the dwelling were left in a complete state of neglect and confusion. The inmates consisted of Mr. Foster, his son James, and his mother, a bed-ridden old woman, half crazed and dying, who never appeared, and was seldom even seen by her own son or husband.

Mr. Foster was fond of display, so that once or twice a year, a bright illumination, a sort of galvanic or electric burst of light seemed on a sudden to blaze forth. The turnpike man, who lived hard by, then knew that Mr. Foster was that night to entertain

his brother clerks. A stray member of parliament, nay, a judge, and, once upon a time, a peer, had graced the board—then all indications of life as suddenly disappeared till the next gala-day, for Foster peremptorily forbade his son to ask any of his dissolute associates to the house. Not that he cared for his son, or *his* character, but he feared for *his own*, in the eyes of the business world. Alas ! that he did not fear the all-seeing eyes of *Him* who cannot be deceived, and who knows the motives of all our actions, however well hidden they may be from our fellow-men.

The elder Foster was, of course, an early riser ; his constitution seemed to brave the ill effects of a life of toil and confinement, for—though his sallow complexion was shrivelled, and his skin withered—he was, at sixty years of age, still upright, and his muscular frame indicated strength both of body and mind. Foster had never been dissipated in his youth ; his whole energies had been put forth, and every passion drowned in the pursuit of wealth. Nay, so

unnatural had been his ardour in this respect, that he had escaped, in every way the reproaches of the world. No one was ever heard to utter a word against him ; but, on the other hand, not a soul ever loved, nay, most people shunned him, as something too mysterious and awful to approach, too unnatural and inhuman even for investigation.

James Foster was about twenty-two years of age, the unworthy son of an unworthy father, who, from the moment of his birth, had instilled, or endeavoured to instil, but one idea into his naturally most empty head, namely, the "acquisition of money." His education had been entirely neglected, for one of his father's favourite maxims was, that all learning was useless except "figures." "Figures," therefore, James Foster studied, which, with a smattering of Latin and Greek, and such information as a most idle boy picks up at school and college, constituted the total sum of his *knowledge*.

He seemed, indeed, to differ little from his

father, but in one respect, which was, that as he soon found out Mr. Foster had plenty of money, he did not relish or understand this extraordinary devotion to the acquisition of more. This feeling did not spring with him from any high-minded contempt of his father's idol, but because he deemed it much more pleasant to pass his time in low riot and dissipation, than to toil for hours in the pursuit of that, which seemed to him already attained. No feeling, save that of fear, and a knowledge that he was entirely dependent, checked this lawless youth in his low career, and it was only when Mr. Foster threatened to stop his supplies, and render him an outcast, that he mended his ways for a season, and dragged his unwilling steps to his father's shrine, the counting-house of the Macgregor.

In person, James Foster had nothing to complain of. Born of humble parents, and not deficient in sharpness, he had early imbibed a wish to be genteel; and when angry, and he dared to do so, he continually re-

mind his father by low and unfeeling allusions to his origin, that he, and he alone, could redeem the family, by his superior and, as he thought, gentlemanly and high-bred demeanour. In point of fact, he was, as our readers can easily guess, a low, vulgar, impertinent coxcomb, without one spark of feeling or honour, entirely devoted to himself, and capable of any mean action. His figure and face were well enough; he rejoiced in an altitude of six feet, curly light hair, and enormous whiskers, and was, in every respect, the *beau ideal* of a smart Glasgow clerk.

At the period of our tale, father and son were seated at half-past seven, one dreary, dark morning, in the parlour of their house, awaiting the drawing up of the eternal shabby gig which daily dragged them to Glasgow. The elder Foster never looked tired. His clear eye betokened a clear head, while the feverish, anxious aspect of his son indicated that he was already, though of a hardy constitution, beginning to pay the certain

penalty of an attachment to late hours, and, worse still, to spirituous liquors and low company. Between these two worthies, connected as they were by the most sacred of all ties, no congenial feeling reigned, not a touch of love, nor even of affection, warmed the hearts of either, and they sat there, each gloomily wrapped in his own thoughts, a dreadful illustration of an unprincipled father, and a weak and dissipated son. Their reverie was now interrupted by a hurried ringing at the door-bell, which caused Mr. Foster to break silence as follows:—"James, I suppose that is the gig—come along—you were not at the counting-house yesterday."

"No, sir," replied he "I am not anxious to go to-day, either."

"What!" angrily answered his father, "I once for all warn you that I will not be trifled with. Mr. Macgregor," here he was stopped by the entrance of a dirty-looking man-servant, who presented him with a note. Mr. Foster never got excited, or did things

without due consideration, therefore he coolly looked at it, and put it down, when the servant interrupted him by saying in broad Scotch, which is far above our powers to imitate, that the bearer was anxious for a reply. The man's manner seemed to indicate that something important had occurred, so Foster opened, read, and, with a peculiar smile, handed the paper to his son.

"Halloo!" cried the young man. "What! the old boy's off, at last! I suppose, father you will not want me now at the counting-house! Hurrah! what jolly fun!"

"Sir," said Mr. Foster, whose countenance had now completely resumed its habitual expression, "this is no time for the display of such conduct. Pray recollect that the departed, Mr. Macgregor, was both my benefactor and friend. He is gone, and, from his age and general health, there is nothing extraordinary, I think, in the intelligence."

Having seated himself, and written a reply to the effect that he would instantly come to the office, and, if necessary, to Mr. Macgre-

gor's country-house, where his death had taken place, Foster, followed by his son, proceeded to the hall ; here they put on their coats and mounted into the gig, which had now drawn up, and half-an-hour afterwards were occupying the tall stools where the life of one, and some few months of the other, had been constantly passed.

CHAPTER VI.

It is not necessary to describe Mr. Macgregor's counting-house; all counting-houses are the same, with the exception that the superior cleanliness of the clerks, larger mass of deeds, parchments, and tin boxes in some indicate a greater amount of business than in others. This one was of the former class. Some half dozen young men were engaged in writing, and their zeal seemed redoubled on the entrance of the Fosters. James proceeded to his usual desk, while his father retired to an inner room, and summoned the second clerk, a man of the name of Jones,

to his presence. There was nothing particular about this person; he looked somewhat careworn and thin with toil, but the expression of his countenance was amiable and pleasing.

“Jones,” said Foster, as he stirred the fire with greater complacency than usual, “have you heard that Mr. Macgregor is dead?”

“No, sir,” replied the person addressed, and who looked pale and frightened, “is it so, indeed? How very sudden! When did it take place?”

“A few hours ago,” was the reply, “in the country, Jones—it is quite true. But why do you stand gaping at me? There is nothing very strange in an old man’s death, is there?”

“No,” stammered Jones “but”—

“But what, sir?” roared Foster, who now showed himself capable of the most violent passion, when his anger was aroused. “Are you about to resume that subject which I thought was for ever settled between us? Recollect, sir, that now the old man’s

gone, the past can never be altered," and he laid a great stress on the word *never*. "Mark me, Jones, your ill-founded fears, and wretched cowardice about nothing, will not save you. It is now too late, and I glory that the line of conduct you threatened, it is now impossible for you to pursue."

"Oh, sir!" gasped Jones, who seemed to have almost lost the power of speech, "had I but seen him—Mr. Foster, if you only knew the misery I suffer—you say right, it is now too late."

"It is," said Foster, in a firm tone of voice, "fetch me that box with the deeds *we* all signed; you know, Jones!" ..

He laid a stress on the word *we*, which caused the poor man to groan again. The inhuman Foster appeared to gratify his hatred in the torture he inflicted, while the unfortunate Jones seemed smitten to the earth at the awful news, and at the malice of his tormentor.

He left the room, however, and shortly returned bearing a heavy box, which Foster

proceeded to unlock. He next ordered Jones to sit down, with which he complied, though apparently much against his will, and awaited the further *commands* of his employer.

“Yes, here it is,” slowly resumed Foster, unrolling a thick law-looking document, a deed drawn up by Macfarlane & Co., bearing date July, 1843, being a contract between William Macgregor and Robert Foster, joint partners in the firm of Macgregor & Co., duly signed and executed by both parties, and witnessed by James Foster and (he paused, and looked at his victim) Hector Jones.”

Jones was about to speak, but Foster proceeded with a wave of his hand to enjoin silence. “By which the parties, William Macgregor and Robert Foster do covenant and agree that at the dissolution of either, the whole and entire of the business, works, houses, lands, &c., of which they, and they alone, are sole proprietors, shall become the entire property of the survivor.”

“That is very clear, Jones, is it not? there are all the signatures,—‘*Hector Jones*’” said this cruel and worthless man, regardless of the misery he evidently inflicted, “There it is—is that your writing?—Jones, speak, man!”

“Yes, you know it is!” said the latter —“*but—*”

“*But*, again!” shouted Foster, in a menacing tone, “*but what?*”

“Oh, sir, you know,” replied Jones plucking up some degree of courage, “you know I never *would* have signed that document, had I—”

“No, fool—driveller!” exclaimed Foster, in a voice of malignant passion, “no, but you *did* sign it; and can you undo that? Listen to me, once for all;” continued he in an authoritative manner, “I have told you a thousand times that, although you were not certainly in possession of the whole of the particulars of the estate, the business, or intentions of Mr. Macgregor, there is nothing illegal in this document,

and that, should it ever be questioned, *you*, as a witness, cannot be blamed; and, as to your private feelings of honesty, honour, and fear that Mr. Macgregor's real intentions may be frustrated, I do not care a straw for them. Nay, I despise and detest such childish folly, and will withdraw my support which I have so lavishly given to yourself and family, should I, from this hour, hear of, or be annoyed with, your whinings and useless regrets of what is now past and unavoidable."

This explanation seemed, in some degree, to pacify the poor man. He acknowledged the kindness of his patron, inquired the particulars of Mr. Macgregor's death, and finally left the room, with another caution from Foster never again to allude to this document, at the peril of his most decided anger and vengeance.

On being left alone, Foster spent an hour in looking over papers, &c., wrote the note which summoned Horace to Scotland, and,

shortly afterwards, drove out to Mr. Macgregor's country-house, nine miles distant, to make arrangements for the funeral—plotting still.

CHAPTER VII.

THOUGH the elder Foster's infamous schemes for his own benefit were deeply laid, and the opportune death of his patron seemed likely to crown his hopes with success, he was well aware that such things as "wills," late wills, secret wills, penned by old men at solitary hours, notwithstanding their protestations to the contrary, often had existed, and overturned the anxious hopes of greedy heirs, just as the prize seemed certain. He also knew that the late Mr. Macgregor, who had made Foster a complete confidant, intended that Ho-

race, his grandson, should succeed to his vast share of the business, which alone produced many thousands per annum; and that, although he had often said he had made no will, but trusted implicitly to his partner's honesty after his death, yet it occurred to Foster, as he slowly rolled along in his gig to Langton Hall, that a will there *might be*; and he inwardly resolved to lose no time in searching for, and possessing himself of such a document, if one existed.

Did Foster, this wicked, hard man, about to commit this detestable action, pause for one moment, and reflect on the villany of such conduct? No! Hardened in his career, this was to him but one step more—the necessary step—to the achievement of his object. He argued that suspicion could never fall on him; his character (he involuntarily started at the thought) was above suspicion; and a will, “a will,” he repeated, half aloud, “would ruin all.”

He was to meet the lawyer, Mr. Macfarlane, at Langton Hall; and, according

to Scotch law, they were to proceed, immediately on their arrival, to lock up and seal all papers, desks, &c., of the deceased.

Foster found, on his arrival, that the lawyer was not yet there. This gave him courage; so that, after having spoken to the old butler, who seemed deeply grieved at his master's sudden death, and taking some refreshment, he proceeded at once to the library; and, amongst a heap of other papers, to his great astonishment, he discovered at once the object of his search. It seemed, indeed, as if the evil spirit had placed it there, to smile on and assist his nefarious schemes, for it saved him the picking of locks, which he had resolved inwardly to perpetrate, and thus rendered less in his eyes, owing to the extreme simplicity of putting a simple roll of paper in his pocket, a crime equally great as if he had broken a thousand seals, or locks, to possess himself of the will.

Foster trembled—yes, the villain trembled—as he felt the rustling of the paper when

it glided into the depths of the breast pocket of his coat—but it was more with excitement than fear. He returned to the dining-room—hastily swallowed a glass of wine; and had further composed himself, when the door opened, and the man of law, courteous and cheerful, entered the apartment. They proceeded together to “make fast,” as Mr. Macfarlane called it, “the properties” of the deceased, during which a sharp conversation on the part of the lawyer, responded curtly to by Foster, enlivened their labours.

“I conclude, Mr. Foster, you have written for the young man, the heir, Mr. Grantham, for nothing can be touched till his arrival,” began Macfarlane.

“I expect him early to-morrow,” replied Foster, “when the seals can be broken, and all papers examined to be laid before Mr. Grantham after the funeral. I am not at all aware of Mr. Macgregor’s intentions regarding him.”

“No, indeed,” said Macfarlane, “if you

are not, nobody else can be, for I believe no citizen ever heard him mention his grandson's name, and it is full five years since he visited this country. However, if report speaks truly, there will be an ample fortune for him, and enough left for you and yours, eh, Foster?"

"You recollect," rejoined Foster, without noticing this last query, "the document drawn and signed in form at your office, regarding the final disposal of the whole of the business at the death of either partner."

"Ay I do, I do," chuckled Macfarlane, winking his eye, "*you've* got the best of that, Foster, though indeed it was a right fair bargain. Your ages were nearly equal, though the poor old gentleman's constitution was much shaken long ere then. Do you suppose, Mr. Macfarlane has much private fortune to dispose of?"

"*How should I know?*" quickly answered Foster. "Do you think because men are partners in business, they are equally so in

their private affairs? Mr. Macgregor's position in society, and the income he spent annually, would warrant people at least in supposing him to be a rich man."

"Oh, yes, indeed, but we shall soon know all about it. Now let us get to Glasgow ere dark," replied the lawyer, "and I only hope you won't forget my fee for this disagreeable duty, Mr. Foster."

They were soon off, Macfarlane to enjoy his dinner in Queen Street, and Foster to meditate, in the silence of his room in the country over his prize,—the will of the poor Macgregor—and on his own misdeeds. Reader, we envy him not.

The poor frightened man Jones, who figured in the scene with Foster at the office, was one of those individuals so often met with in the walk of life to which he belonged, and born of poor parents, who had spent long lives in an endeavour to raise themselves by degrees from poverty. The old Jones's, though thoroughly respectable, had never been able to change their

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destiny. This they did not regret for themselves, as they had all the necessities of life, and wanted nothing more, their scanty pittance, derived from a government pension, being only just sufficient to enable them to purchase food and clothing, but to lay nothing by, so at the time of their deaths, which took place within a few months of each other, the gallant Jones, a poor weak boy of fifteen, was thrown on the world, like many others with no money, and what is nearly as bad, no friends. Good luck directed his steps towards Mr. Macgregor's office. His story was soon told,—his acquirements were looked into, approved of, and from that hour to the present he had, like Foster, been a constant inmate of the office, with this difference that Foster, through his knavery, superior head, and better education, became in time what he now was; while the wretched Jones toiled on in honourable seclusion, once in ten years receiving a slight increase of income.

This increase Jones, with his confused and weak intellect, took for rapid promotion, and this delusion—poor man—kept up his spirits, and, although burthened with a sick wife and half a dozen children, enabled him to continue his toil, and look forward to better times. How groundless his hopes were, any one at all conversant with business life, will at once perceive; indeed, his acquirements were only just capable of getting him through the duties of his present state, and, as his family increased and the times grew worse and worse for the poor,—Jones had many a struggle, and many a miserable scene at his wretched home—yet *home* it was. Jones loved it. He loved his poor wife and children, and with admirable toil devoted his life to these duties, which many a man with his thousands is incapable of fulfilling.

Jones had that sort of pride about him which many have in his circumstances. He disliked begging for money, and had seldom applied to Mr. Macgregor, who, had he known

his real condition, would have readily assisted him. Latterly, however, he had been compelled to apply to Foster, who, for purposes of his own, had advanced him money, which he felt sure in his own mind Jones could never repay. In the year 1843, Foster had hinted for some time to Jones confidentially that he wished him merely to witness a deed about to be drawn up between Mr. Macgregor and himself, which Jones at once agreed to, and it was only when the latter ascertained for certain that this affair had been conducted in mystery and darkness, and his signature filched from him by Foster to the deed, during a thoughtless moment, that the idea of some foul play, though he knew not what, crossed his mind, and rendered him painfully sensitive to what his share might be in the transaction. Foster never revealed to him the purport of the deed till the day Mr. Macgregor died ; the poor man had considered it some matter of business. Nor was he even aware how "the deed" had been signed and witnessed by the other parties.

Nothing could be more complete than his horror and anxiety, when Foster, as our readers recollect, with diabolical cruelty, read the paper to him, and he returned home that night bowed to the earth with a sense of shame, which few men could have felt under the circumstances. And why was this? Simply, because the poor weak Jones had a good, nay, a noble heart. His ways had always been straightforward, and now, though not a willing party, he felt himself entrammelled with some sort of fraud and deceit.

He mentioned nothing to his wife, for he felt the full force of Foster's threat about the money he owed him, and also the fact of his signature being there, rendered any attempt at self-exculpation to others apparently impossible.

He now saw, though he was so confused, that it took him so long to arrange his ideas sufficiently to do so, that Foster by this deed must succeed to the whole management of the large business, and that Mr. Horace,

whom he had seen as a boy, and loved for his likeness to his mother who had been kind to him when young, was likely to come off but badly after all. Poor Jones had not logic enough in his composition to ask himself the likelihood of this or that in the affair. It seemed that Mr. Macgregor had signed the deed, and, although he had not seen him do so, he presumed the others had; he, therefore, tremblingly resolved to await the reading of the will, and act accordingly.

Jones had that sort of suspicion against Foster, which an honest man, even if he be not an intelligent one, will always entertain when in constant contact with one, whose every action denotes meanness, trickery, and self-gratification—though not absolute dishonesty. The poor man could not explain it to himself; indeed, he seldom or never troubled himself with his reasoning faculties, if he had any; but a vague sort of fear oppressed him in Foster's presence, and, though it did not or could not amount to a knowledge of anything evil, it kept him,

since the reading of that dreadful paper, in a constant state of nervous irritability and alarm.

At last he was somewhat relieved, as the idea came across him, that Mr. Macgregor's will would certainly set all right for Master Horace. So, worn out with fatigue, he dropped at last asleep, only to dream of Foster's countenance when reading the deed, and pointing with his finger to his own—yes—Jones's signature at full length! by the side of James Foster's, as a witness—to what?

CHAPTER VIII.

HORACE had a long sleep in the mail train; he did, however, awake at eight o'clock on the following day, at some short distance from Glasgow. The morning was foggy and dark; a thorough Scotch mist, and the smoke of Glasgow, which taints the air for many miles around, sticking together, rendered the atmosphere thick and heavy. The constantly-lit furnaces of the manufactories, and the tall, ever-smoke-emitting chimneys increased in number every yard as they neared this half Pandemonium on earth. The lasses were now to be seen

emerging from their dark alleys, manfully, and with an entire disregard of appearances, striding straight through the dripping rain and dreadfully dirty gutters to their daily work. Such men as are only to be met with in manufacturing towns, slouched heedlessly onwards, whilst the wayside was literally choked up with the rising generation who, revelling in their filth, in happy ignorance, seemed the only part of creation here with a shade of nature and nature's joy about them, how soon, alas, to be changed for gloomy toil, and a knowledge of the sad existence to which they were born!

Through this dreadful scene, for dreadful it is to all who can think, and compare the inconceivably different lots which are apportioned to our species in this world, Horace was borne, wrapt in his own meditations. He was not one who could pass through such a spectacle unmoved; and, whilst dreaming of his own fate, as yet uncertain, though in one respect about to be solved, he thanked God at least that his portion was

above that of those he saw, and also that he had a heart to pity and feel for the wants of his fellow creatures.

On his arrival, a servant awaited him with a note from Foster, with whom he had only a slight acquaintance, informing him that the funeral was arranged for the morrow, and requesting Horace to be his guest during his stay in Glasgow. Horace did not like what he knew of the man, and wished to be alone. He, therefore, answered the note, declining the invitation, but proposing to meet Foster at his late grandfather's office, in a couple of hours.

This done, he went to his hotel, and, having dressed and had breakfast, proceeded at once to his appointment.

Foster received him with the utmost respect and civility; explained the circumstances of his grandfather's death, and hoped that nothing would occur to detain him in Glasgow after the funeral.

"It is the custom," he added, "in Scotland, for the will of the deceased, which is

supposed to be in the country, to be read immediately after the ceremony; but, previously, a search must be made for it. So, I beg to propose, Mr. Grantham, that we drive out this evening to Langton-hall, accompanied by Mr. Macgregor's legal adviser, for that purpose."

"Certainly," replied Horace, "you know that I but obey your commands, being perfectly ignorant of all such proceedings. I will, therefore, beg of you to call for me, at the hotel, when you are ready. It is now eleven o'clock.

"I shall be at your service in an hour," returned Foster.

"Good morning, sir, till then," said Horace, rising, and leaving the room, by no means impressed with a favourable opinion either of Mr. Foster or the establishment he ruled.

Soon after the three gentlemen, or rather the one gentleman and the two men, for neither Foster nor Macfarlane could, with any degree of fairness, lay the slightest claim

to that enviable, though not easily understood, epithet, were on their way to the country. Horace said little or nothing; he felt himself so completely out of his element, that the common words, "yes" or "no" seemed to stick in his throat, and he devoutly thanked the gods when the carriage at last drew up at the dreary portals of Langton-hall, always so solemn and gloomy, but now more so than ever from the death of its owner, and the dreadfully dreary aspect of the weather.

As Foster and the lawyer, now in the presence of the heir, commenced the search, and broke those seals, which had only been placed there the day before, the former felt a secret joy, strange to say unaccompanied with fear, at the disappointment displayed by Horace, when, after a long and strict search, no will could be found.

The young man seemed much annoyed, closely questioned both the gentlemen, as to whether Mr. Macgregor had not entrusted such a document to their care, and finally,

after ransacking every corner, they all returned no wiser than they came. Horace pondered, but pondered in vain. What could be said or done? He was indeed heir-at-law, but he knew that his grandfather had no landed property, and had great reason to believe, from what he had recently heard, that the whole of his grandfather's income had been derived from his business, and from that alone.

Everything seemed clear enough,—he was with his grandfather's legal adviser, and his most intimate friend—he himself had superintended the search—what more could he desire? Yet he felt uncomfortable, he had been sure the will would have been found, and equally certain that his grandfather, by some means or another, had fully provided for him, for the old man had told him such was his intention.

Horace had heard before (who has not?) of old men at the last moment, cutting off their unworthy heirs, and leaving vast sums for Hospitals, &c., but here there seemed

no will, no arrangements, nor bequests, and the more he thought, the more mysterious it seemed, and the more fatal to himself.

Much dismayed, he took his solitary dinner at the hotel, though pressed to dine at the Fosters, and the next morning, as is the custom in Scotland, he proceeded as chief mourner, in the coach, with some few friends of the deceased, to convey the body from the country to Glasgow for interment. Horace's thoughts on the way were not of an enviable nature, for they were not proper to the occasion—his youth was his excuse, and it must be acknowledged he did think more over his expectations than he should have done, and less of the mournful and painful ceremony, he was thus suddenly called upon to witness.

The arrangements observed at a Scotch funeral are totally different to those at an English one, and, we think, not half so impressive. Horace had never attended one before, and, as he entered the dining-room and perceived a number of benches placed

all over the apartment, as if for a concert, he could not understand what was about to take place; he, however, took his seat, and soon, carriage after carriage rolled up—and each person on entering the room bowed, and took his seat in silence.

All the guests were of the male sex, and friends or acquaintances of the deceased.

A servant now entered, and handed round cake and wine; after which an extempore sermon or prayer, suited to the occasion and eulogizing the merits of the deceased, was delivered by a dignitary of the Scotch church. This was very impressive and solemn, and Horace felt it deeply. The ceremony ended abruptly; and all rose, entered their carriages, and, having formed a procession, headed by the hearse, they returned slowly to Glasgow, where the coffin was interred in the burial-ground of the Cathedral, without prayer or ceremony, or even the attendance of the clergyman, in the presence of Horace, Foster, and a few, a very few, of the most intimate friends of the departed.

The party then proceeded to Mr. Macfarlane's residence, where, in the presence of that individual, Foster, his son, and a few other officials, not forgetting the unfortunate Jones, Horace received the final death-blow to all his hopes in the production of the deed alluded to, which Macfarlane read aloud, and by which it clearly seemed that Foster lawfully inherited the whole of the business, works, and lands, which last meant indeed only that portion consisting of buildings in Glasgow, &c., for, as already mentioned, there was no landed property on the death of the deceased. The lawyer, also, stated that no will having been found, it would require some time to investigate his affairs, and, consequently there was not at present a penny which Horace (though heir-at-law to any private fortune of his grandfather) could touch, or call his own!

Who that has been in similar circumstances cannot figure to themselves the feelings of Horace on this occasion? There never had been a doubt on the subject, and

Horace, naturally generous, but not extravagant, had never considered money at all. His grandfather, eccentric, but yet kind, had, when living, given him all he required, and it now seemed cruel, hard, unbearable—nay, wicked—to be so situated; he felt at war with himself and all the world, and only longed to get away from a place so full of horrors and disappointments.

Indeed, there seemed nothing to detain him. The interview was pronounced over; he, therefore, coldly rose, saluted the company, and retired, merely informing Foster that he intended returning to London the following day. On his way out, he met Jones, who had now, for the first time, heard this fatal news, about no will being forthcoming, and his worst fears were verified. He loved Horace, and had been his kind friend on many a boyish occasion. He now felt acutely for him, and, although in the elegant and handsome youth before him, he barely recognised his friend of former years, he was determined not to let him

depart without some kind word, some show of sympathy for his disappointment, when all others were formal, cold, business-like, and indifferent.

He, therefore, unseen to Foster, slipped out of the room, and meeting Horace below, seized his hand, and in tones which sufficiently bespoke his feeling, poured forth his sorrow at the turn affairs had taken, and his hopes that all might yet be well.

"Yes, my good fellow," said Horace, who now recognised him, and returned the pressure of his honest hand, "it is of no use saying it is not a great, a severe disappointment. But it is the will of God, and, therefore, must be borne; though I confess it will require much philosophy on my part."

"I am sure, Master Horace," said Jones, with tears in his eyes, "you deserve a better fate. Ah! Master Horace, you are the very picture of the dear lady, your mother. I am glad indeed she never lived to see this day. But do not despair, I feel confident, although a poor weak body, that

your grandfather *has* made a will, though it cannot be found."

"I think that impossible, my good Jones; we must have found it. I confess I am greatly astonished at the deed I have just heard read. (Jones shuddered, but dared not speak.) It seems so extraordinary that Foster, a total stranger, no relation, and a man of low origin, should inherit all this wealth, while I, the rightful heir, get none of it. Yet it is all clear; the document is plain, and is signed by my grandfather himself. Jones, there is nothing to hope, but believe me, my old friend, in no one way do I regret my poverty more, than that the means of assisting an honest man like yourself (Jones winced again) are taken from me. I know you are poor, and most worthy. When you want a friend, Jones, write to me, my good fellow; though I am a poor instead of a rich one, what I have left shall assist you, if fortune goes too hard with you; if not, Jones, your own spirit will keep you, I know, from doing so, for I am indeed now

little better off than yourself, barring the wife and family, eh!" concluded Horace, seeing the agitation under which the poor man laboured.

"Master Horace," said Jones, "they are all I possess, my only comfort. God grant in his mercy he may preserve them, and you also, but I have many fears!"

They were now interrupted by steps above, and the speaker nervously bade adieu to Horace, who, for the moment, had forgotten his own misfortunes in the simple, though touching language of poor Jones.

CHAPTER IX.

HORACE GRANTHAM, like many other young men, was capable of good resolutions, and, though he was crushed and mortified by his recent disappointment, he determined, on his return home, to inform his father of his wish instantly to seek some employment. Yet, when he reflected during his thirteen hours' rapid journey to the great Metropolis, upon his own position, his father's unnatural neglect of him, and his thoroughly selfish nature, his heart fainted within him, for he felt alone, deserted, and most miserable.

He was just of that age when a man's

character for good or evil, for virtue or vice, generally manifests itself, and such circumstances as he was now placed in, were particularly suited to call forth and develop his natural dispositions, inclinations, and powers of mind.

At this moment, all these indicated that the good star was in the ascendant, and, had he possessed one real friend, one kind and wise monitor to guide his steps, he would indeed have escaped much of that misery and debasement which followed. But, alas, it was not so. Horace, with all goodness and nobleness of character, wanted firmness, and in his father, who should have been to him at such a crisis, not only a parent, but a friend, he saw nothing, and judged truly, was but a cold, unnatural, and hard man of the world.

Here let us pause, and consider for a moment how often this is the case, and how dreadful are the consequences.

Moralists, particularly in the present day, are hasty enough in condemning the vices

and follies of youth, but do they sufficiently investigate the causes which often lie at the root of all?

How many youths are there wandering about amid the busy scenes of life, whose parents, though affluent and even powerful, never bestow a thought on their moral training, far less cultivate that natural feeling of love and duty in their children, which all originally possess, and which only becomes blunted, when the knowledge is at last forced on them that they are nothing more than stumbling-blocks in their path, that they are looked on, not as boons from the most High, but as interlopers, who must indeed be fed, clothed, and educated according to their different grades of life, but who are not worthy of consideration, affection, nay, even common regard!

How few fathers there are, and how dreadful is the consideration, who are at all aware of the sacred obligations, the all-powerful trust, which is committed to them in the direction and training of the youthful

mind, and, fewer still, who have sense and feeling enough to know, that of all friendships, a father's to his own son, is not only the most natural, but the most necessary, and by far the most likely to steer the giddy passions of youth clear of the precipices, which surround us all. Fathers, fathers of the present generation, ye are all addressed, though some, indeed, form a gladsome contrast to the picture above, pause and reflect!

Do ye indeed blame the dissipated, the erring, and the lost—are ye estranged from those whom God gave, and whom, in reality, no crimes should sunder from ye, for no father should desert his son, his own flesh and blood? Pause, reflect! Is there no neglect on your own parts of those numberless duties, which it should be the pride and inclination of ye all to perform? Has there been that fond affection, that watchful care in boyhood, that gentle, though firm, guidance in youth, which, at once, attach the hearts, and ensure the respect of

sons? If there has not, think again, and though ye may quote the evil passions of our nature, which are almost sure to develop themselves, unless these duties have been performed, and these feelings cultivated, recollect, that ye, ye alone are to blame, and that it is never too late to relent and receive the lost sheep to the paternal fold again!

A father and a son! the most sacred tie on earth. What does it mean in reality? What are the obligations of each, in the all-seeing eyes of Providence, what the actual conduct of many here below? The contrast of what is, and what ought to be, in this respect is dreadful indeed, and it is only too true that many a noble youth has been lost, entirely lost, from the neglect, apathy, and worldly-mindedness of the very man, whose principal mission on earth was nothing less than to guide him aright, love him as he loves himself, and spare no pains, no trou-

ble, to ensure for his offspring, as far as it can be ensured in this world of strife, a virtuous character and a noble mind.

Who, indeed, let us ask, is a son to look to in danger, difficulty, distress, illness, disappointment, or temptation, but a father—is he your friend? poor son, lost outcast!—if thy heart says “No,” let us pity thee in truth, and look lightly and with gentle consideration on thy lone career, for lone it must be through life, in comparison with the fortunate youth, who possesses at once both a father and a friend, who feels that the being who brought him into the world, and fondled him years ago in play, is now his guide, the devoted object of his reverence, and his attachment, the pattern of his ways, and his refuge in distress.

Worse, almost worse indeed than absolute ill treatment, for that hardens the heart of many, and renders them callous at last to the conduct of their parents, is that chilling indifference, that polite neglect with which many fashionable fathers treat

their ill-fated sons? This is generally the case, when the selfishness and world-worship of the parent has completely mastered all natural feeling, though he has yet an interest left in the worldly position of his son. This is shown in the conduct of many men, who think that if they send their sons to fashionable schools, and then buy them commissions, or force them into any profession, which may be much convenient to themselves, without the slightest endeavour to suit such to the talents, temper, or inclination of the boy himself, that they really perform their duties admirably. Miserable mistake, the fatal result of a false philosophy and the worship of the world! Truly, we consider the youth, who has affectionate parents, and a *home* in the true sense of the word, more fortunate, ay, a thousand times more fortunate, and more likely eventually to do well, than he who, however fashionable his education, or great his talents, knows and feels himself an outcast, or at least, a troublesome appendage to his selfish, and unnatural relatives.

Horace Grantham was in the position we have just described; his father, according to his own views, had not neglected his education, nor absolutely forbidden him his house. On the other hand, Horace never recollected hearing a kind word from his lips, or one expression of feeling escape him. His whole soul seemed wrapped in *self*, and so ill was this disguised, that Horace had years ago discovered it, and many had been his attempts to overcome his father's invincible repugnance to him. Yet strange and unnatural as it appears, Mr. Grantham had no one sentiment of even regard for Horace, though he felt him most deserving, and acknowledged his career as yet to be blameless, if not distinguished—he could not bring himself to look on him with any other eyes than those at least of total indifference, a treader on his heels, an unwelcome interloper.

As long as his grandfather lived and supplied him with money, which Mr. Grantham's unwarrantable extravagance pre-

vented his doing himself, that gentleman had no fears or annoyance on that score; but when a letter arrived from his son with the Glasgow post-mark, announcing his being left without a shilling, he actually felt himself the sufferer, and, with an extraordinary perversion, insisted to his wife that he was far more to be pitied than Horace on the occasion. "For," said he, "*I* shall have to make him an allowance," (wonderful generosity—noble consideration) "and pray, Mrs. Grantham, where is it to come from?"

"How should *I* know, Mr. Grantham? But I suppose you must do for Horace as all fathers do," she answered.

"Yes," replied Mr. Grantham, "that's the worst of it; he has already had plenty of money from his grandfather, and his habits, if not extravagant, are expensive; what a pity he left the army!"

"Ah yes," quickly said Mrs. Grantham, "did not I advise against that step—but it was all of no use—*you* didn't seem to care *what* he did."

“That is perfectly true, my dear, for I considered it certain his grandfather would provide for him ; nor can I now understand what it means. But Horace will be back to-night, and make further explanations. What a blow to me, for with an extensive establishment, God knows I have not a penny to dispose of, even to Horace! I declare it is enough to drive one mad, just when it appeared so certain to get him entirely off my hands for ever. It is most provoking and cruel;” and the *sensible* and *feeling* Mr. Grantham looked gloomily to his wife—who sat as smiling as ever—for sympathy and comfort under this awful blow.

Recollect, reader, that all this was said by a man, surrounded with every luxury and comfort—who spent his income, which, with his wife’s, amounted to little short of £3,000 a year, entirely *on himself*, and who had but to forego a few, a very few of those luxuries (not the comforts), to enable him to give his son—his *only son*—a handsome allowance, and place him on his proper footing in society.

But no, in his ideas, and in his wife's also, the loss of one horse, or the cutting down of one domestic, was a painful event, calculated to lower them, as they considered, in their position in society, and there they were right, for it is, alas, too true, that in the present day one's position, and the estimation one is held in, are decided far more by outward appearances than by actual merit. As to the logic of feeling reward from one's own conscience, independently of the opinion of the world, both Mr. and Mrs. Grantham were totally dead to any such sentiment. Indeed, the idea of such a thing had, probably, never entered the head of either, and certainly not for the last twenty years.

Let us not dwell too long on the painful position which our hero now necessarily occupied at his father's house. His explanations were soon made, and, although he pined for sympathy, advice, and assistance, his conscience told him he might look for this in vain, and his pride prevented him

from openly showing what he felt. Every hour opened his eyes more and more to his unenviable lot, and the necessity for immediate action and exertion became daily apparent and urgent. But everywhere he turned he met with chilling indifference, which mortified his soul, and deadened within him that natural energy, which would have saved him, had he been differently situated.

His father, at first, could not believe the story of the will, or rather no will, and sent down a lawyer of ability to investigate everything, who soon returned, totally discomfited, and routed, with the dread intelligence that all was just and legal, though most unfortunate and irremediable.

Treated with apathy by his father, who, when the subject was alluded to, did nothing but blame him, for what he called, "his folly in not better insuring his grandfather's regards," and shunned by his friends, as no longer the heir, but the dependent son, Horace's whole nature revolted and turned

sick at his fate. He became by degrees sad and gloomy, and his appearance denoted him a disappointed and wretched man. Worse still, spurning to associate with people whom he despised, and debarred the joys of a paternal home, he turned for distraction, as others have done, and will most surely do again, when under the ban of a father's neglect, to dissipation, and low society, hoping, in the vain endeavour of seeking amusement, by constant excitement, to banish care and to drown thought.

Here again was another of the most glaring evils inherent to man, brought on by Mr. Grantham's unnatural conduct, for Horace had naturally no such inclinations, and, though he continued his mad and fatal career, his heart condemned his own conduct, and he felt himself thoroughly lowered in his own estimation. But, where to seek a remedy? He appealed in vain to Mr. Grantham to enable him to enter into some profession, or to procure him some sort of situation under government, or otherwise.

His father always threw in his teeth his having left the army, he himself *not having* opposed it, as a sufficient excuse for his not exerting himself again—and took the opportunity also of telling him at once that, as long as he lived, he had nothing to expect from him, further than a shelter to his head, and sufficient food to keep him alive.

This unfeeling conduct at last roused Horace's temper, long (how long?) held back in hopes of a change, and father and son parted one morning both in violent anger. Horace having, galled to the utmost, openly reproached him, and used language and expressions, which, however truthful and deserving, he regretted having spoken the instant he became cool, as it only rendered his position still more uncomfortable, and gave him that unpleasant feeling which all have, who, even though they may be in the right, so far forget themselves as to overstep the limits, which it is the duty of every son, no matter what the circumstances, to keep within when addressing a parent.

Mr. Grantham now saw the absolute necessity of making Horace an allowance of some sort; and, after sundry discussions with his wife, he had made up his mind to sound his son further on the subject, when, one morning he was agreeably surprised by the entrance of the young man, who handed him a communication he had just received from Foster, notifying that the sum of £5,000 was his, if he chose to accept of it—not indeed as a positive right, but, as Foster said in his letter, because he being well aware of Mr. Macgregor's intentions, which he had oftener mentioned to him, considered that the whole of his personal property, which had been turned into money belonged to Horace, his undoubted heir.

Then followed a long rigmarole on various matters and law opinions, which made it clearly appear that the whole of Mr. Macgregor's money was embarked in the business; and, as such, belonged to Foster, according to the deed, which had caused our poor friend Jones such dismay and vexation.

The £5,000 alluded to arose from the sale of plate, furniture, library, and personal effects of the deceased, and a couple of thousand pounds in his cash-box; which the wily Foster, though it strangely tempted his avarice, thought better to let quietly go, thereby hoping to drown all inquiry and recollections of the past.

“What do you think, sir,” said Horace, “am I entitled to this sum?”

“Entitled!” exclaimed his father, half starting from his chair with a look of anger, “what on earth do you mean, sir? *Entitled!* why, I have often heard you say you considered yourself cruelly treated in not inheriting fifty times that sum!”

“That I am aware of;” quietly resumed Horace, “but the law did not think so, and I merely wished to know whether you consider I should accept—for it comes in a sort of half-gift-like form—such a sum from a man like Foster, to whom I would wish to be under no obligation, could I avoid it.”

“Obligation! — wish! — young man,”

echoed the elder Grantham, "sir, when you have lived in the world as long as I have, you'll know the value of £5,000 a little better. Why, you must be mad! This man, who I confess has greatly risen in my opinion, has merely carried out the known wishes of your deceased grandfather, and there cannot be a doubt that you inherit all his private fortune and personal property, which, indeed, does not seem considerable. What there is in heaven's name take, and do not make a fool of yourself! I fairly tell you," added he, rising, and advancing towards his son, "that I cannot and *will not* allow you a farthing, should you refuse this money. Invested at five per cent, it will yield you £250 per annum, a sum quite sufficient to enable you to live abroad in affluence. Indeed," continued he, "it comes most opportunely, for it was only this morning I had resolved speaking to you on the subject of an allowance, which would necessarily have fallen far short of that which is now within your grasp. Let me hear no more of this folly!"

Horace, thus overruled, and half convinced, wrote to Mr. Foster, thanked him, and that very evening informed Mr. and Mrs. Grantham of his intention of proceeding at once to the Continent.

CHAPTER X.

HORACE'S arrangements for his pilgrimage were quickly made, the cold and formal "adieux" to his father and mother-in-law got over, and, as he stepped on board the Ostend steamer at Dover, he felt for the first time a sense of independence and hope within him; not, indeed, that he had formed any definite plan, or even knew whither he was bound, still there was something cheering in the escape, at least from continued neglect and insult, for what is neglect but insult, when the object neglected is worthy, as Horace was, of consideration and regard?

His goods and chattels consisted of a portmanteau, hat box, carpet bag, and that necessary lump of taglionis and plaids which all Englishmen travel with, strapped together. As he smoked his cigar on deck, on a fine, though cold November night, he felt himself a better man in every respect than he had been for some time past. Even the short passage he was now taking, seemed to him, in comparison with his late life, a work not of danger, but activity; and as the wind rose, and the waves looked more threatening, he smiled, and welcomed his old friends again, for he had passed, years ago, many a happy day at sea with his brother officers, who, and he sighed as he thought of it, were now all scattered far and wide, and he left to brave the storm of life alone. Yet, strange to say, he now felt less discouraged than formerly. His spirits rose with each bound of the gallant vessel, and he paced the deck, wrapped in his thoughts, occasionally exchanging a word or two with

the man at the helm, till long past midnight, when he retired, and, without undressing, threw himself on a sofa for a few hours' repose below.

"What sort of a night is it, sir?" said a voice from the next sofa, or rather from out of a huge mass of coats and blankets, through which scarcely any semblance of the human form was visible. "I wish this cursed passage was over!"

"It is blowing rather hard," replied Horace, "but the mate says we shall get in as usual, by seven o'clock."

"Deuce take it!" said the voice, "I only wish it was over!"

At this moment, the vessel gave a tremendous lurch, and heavy swing, which had the effect of pitching not only our new friend, but several other worthy passengers, into the middle of the cabin. The scene was extremely ludicrous, and Horace, who never suffered from sea-sickness, could not resist laughing, in which the deplorable state of the rest prevented them from joining.

“Curse it!” said the only speaker besides Horace, the young man alluded to, who now sat on the floor of the cabin, endeavouring to collect his coats and coverings, which task was rendered every moment more difficult by the increased pitching of the steamer; “this is pleasant work. I conclude sir,” added he, addressing Horace, “that you are either a sailor, or a near relation to one, for you do not seem to care a rap about it.”

The speaker, as far as Horace could judge, was a young man of about twenty-five years of age, with curly black hair, his whole appearance denoting the fashionable *roué*.

His conversation was perpetually interlarded with extraordinary words and epithets, and—though his present manner was subdued by sea-sickness, which tames even the British lion—there was something very pleasant and humourous in his face, which would have been handsome had it not been for the sinister expression of his dark and

piercing eyes, which seemed to see through everything at a glance, and read the thoughts of others even before they had given them utterance.

Horace laughingly replied, that he was a first-rate sailor, and would just look out again to report upon the night, which he did, and returned with the intelligence that it was blowing an awful gale, and that the sea was washing the decks in fine style.

This caused sundry white night-caps to appear quickly from various corners of the cabin. Anxious questions were asked, and the unfortunate steward was worried to death ; which elicited the usual reply of :—

“Fine night, sir ; just off Dunkirk ; shall be in the harbour by seven.”

Another hour passed, a dreadful, dreadful hour to those who suffer from that greatest of earthly ills, for the moment, sea-sickness. The motion of the vessel increased, rather than diminished, and the steward had just entered the cabin with the joyful intelligence

that they were running into the harbour, when a tremendous crash shook the whole vessel, then a heavy bound, then another crash, mingled with shouts, and the quick running of the crew on the deck. This was alarming enough, and every one was on his legs in a moment.

Our hero, followed by the smart young man, quickly gained the deck, and soon perceived the cause of all this disturbance, which was simply that the vessel, in crossing the bar, had encountered some tremendous seas, lost her steerage way, and notwithstanding the exertions of the men at the helm, and the well-known skill of her daring commander, had struck on the entrance, on the pier-head, stove in her paddle-box, missed the harbour, and was now drifting straight on to the sand-hills, to the eastward of the town.

The situation looked, however, far more perilous than it really was, as the captain assured them all would go right. The steam

was eased, and, in about five minutes, the vessel went comfortably a-ground, about a hundred yards distant from the shore, where, after another five minutes scraping and pitching, she settled in the sand, amid the shrieks of the women, the oaths of the crew, and the roaring of the wind, which rendered the captain's voice, even through his speaking-trumpet, almost inaudible. It was just light,—already crowds of people, who had witnessed the disaster, were seen through the fog running to give them assistance. Boats, horses and carts were put in requisition, and in less than an hour all were safely landed, with no further inconvenience than the luggage being soaked thoroughly through.

“Well, this *is* a nice go,” said our new friend to Horace. “What the deuce is to be done? I want to get to Brussels to-night. In fact, I *must* get there. Where are *you* bound?”

“That's more than I can exactly say,” replied Horace, who, though he did not quite

like the familiarity of his fellow passenger, was too well bred not to answer a question so directly put. "But, I suppose the first thing to be done is to get to an hotel. I have directed the *valet-de-place* to see our things through the Custom-house."

"Upon my soul, sir, much obliged to you," returned the young man. "What hotel shall we go to?"

"That I cannot say," said Horace, "for I have never been here before."

"I always go to the Cour Imperial. The old boy there knows my tastes," added he, looking at Horace, with a knowing expression, "he'll turn you up a dinner for three francs a head fit for an alderman. What do you say? Shall it be? or, as Shakspeare says, 'to be, or not to be, that is the question.'"

Thus appealed to, Horace without positive rudeness could not get off, and notwithstanding the apparent vulgarity of the gentleman with whom he now found himself thrown in contact, he was both amused

and interested. So, in spite of his better judgment, he assented to the proposition, and, in less than an hour, they found themselves getting comfortably through an excellent breakfast together, after dressing and washing at the famed hotel, the Cour Imperial, of the noble city of Ostend.

Horace spoke French fluently, and he soon found that his new friend, whose vivacity increased every moment, was, notwithstanding his slang, a clever, and most amusing companion. Indeed, he felt more at home with him after ten hours' acquaintance than he ever had done with his own father during his whole life. They were about the same age, and, as the Honourable Mr. Curtis, for so he introduced himself to Horace, rattled on, it seemed as if this extraordinary genius knew everything and everybody, and Horace was at last quite bewildered at the extent of his knowledge and information.

"I must say," began Curtis, as he lit his cigar after breakfast, "it's devilish lucky I

met you, Mr. Grantham. Now just consider, if I had been left alone, what the deuce could I have done with myself? I hate being alone, and on board that unlucky smoker there was not a soul one could speak to, was there?"

"Well," said Horace, "I certainly did not admire what I saw of the passengers."

"Confound it," proceeded Curtis, twisting his mustachios, and looking in the glass, "I should say not. Now, my good sir, excuse my familiarity, but I cannot help it, what's to be done? We can't leave to-day. The waiter says, our things can't be dry under twenty-four hours. So here we are, and, I suppose, must make the best of it. No patent steam-engines here, you know, to dry things. Slow and sure, that's the ticket. Well I'm devilish glad I am here, at any rate."

"Thought I heard you lamenting your fate, just now," said Horace.

"Yes, right," replied Curtis, "but you don't exactly twig—I might be worse off if

I were on the other side. Ha! ha!" said he, "it's very convenient; these French and Belgian sea-ports have saved many a poor devil from a cruelly hard fate."

"I don't understand you," said Horace: "what fate?"

"Paying their just and lawful debts, or getting into quod; both unpleasant alternatives, sometimes," quietly returned Curtis. "Oh, I forgot; you don't understand it—it's what's called 'getting out of the way,' and means nothing, but is excessively convenient occasionally to many, and has just proved of infinite service to your very humble servant."

"I am sorry to hear that you are in difficulties," replied Horace, "but no doubt they are only temporary."

"Oh, of course," said the honourable gentleman; "but it's no use thinking of one's misfortunes: it's contrary to my principles. And now," resumed he, "again I ask, what's to be done? I do not know a soul in this wretched hole, and of course you do not.

but let us go out, and see what's to be seen. Do you ever play at billiards?"

"Seldom," replied Horace, "but I have no objection, as we must remain here, to play a game or two—I do not play well."

"I think," said Curtis, "I can get our boniface to write our names down at the 'Société,' here, where there is a good table."

"Allons," said Horace, and the two young men lounged together first over the town, then along the fine sea walk called the Digue, and finally into the club in the square, where the honourable Mr. Curtis had taken especial care, before leaving the hotel, that no impediment should arise to bar their entrance.

Curtis, who was a roué of the worst stamp, though of good family—a man entirely dissipated, and lost to any principles of honour, of fear of God or man—had marked Horace for his prey, from the first moment of their acquaintance. Possessing a fashionable, though somewhat faded, exterior, and having originally had a good education, with great

natural ability and powers of observation, this man was peculiarly dangerous, for he knew how to adapt his conversation, and to suit his style to the sort of person whom chance threw in his way. On this occasion, he put on an off-hand frankness, and devil-me-care manner, which he thought would be most likely to disarm any suspicion that Horace might entertain of his ultimate intentions.

The latter, indeed, though he had been dissipated, and, like other young fellows, gone through and witnessed many of the scenes of London life, had, our readers can easily imagine, never descended to anything low or vulgar, or come in immediate contact with persons of the Hon. Mr. Curtis's class. Gambling, in particular, he held in especial abhorrence, and, though he had heard of people who live by their wits, extorting the last shilling from their unfortunate victims, and then leaving them to despair, he had never imagined it could have been his lot to be so tried and tempted.

Curtis was a completely ruined man. In debt in England, though his father had often paid them for him, he was now, and had been for some time, associated with a knot of the most disreputable people, male and female, in France and Belgium, whose sole occupation consisted in entrapping the unwary, and leading them onwards by degrees, if they once entered on their fated career, to certain destruction.

Horace, completely ignorant of the danger he was in, thoughtlessly thus commenced an acquaintance which was fraught with danger, allowing himself, as many do, to be led on, simply because any acquaintance was better to him, in his frame of mind, than none at all, and he did not choose to listen to the "still small voice" within, which prompted him to be cautious and beware.

As they entered the room, a large, low, vault-like place, with small tables placed at intervals over the entire space not occupied by the billiard-table, Curtis saw one of his companions. He immediately made him a

private sign which the other perfectly understood, to the effect that they were not to recognise each other. The individual in question therefore went on eating his cutlet, and discussing his pint of *vin ordinaire*, attentively observing the movements of Curtis and his friend, who proceeded towards the billiard-table, and commenced operations, playing at first for five francs a game, all of which Horace won, when he liberally proposed giving odds, which Curtis at once accepted, and the game started afresh.

Our friend of the square table now advanced and proposed a bet, which Horace, who was, it must be allowed, gratified at this favourable display of his skill, at once accepted, and won again. This was all that was necessary. It was proposed that they should play again in the evening, and they returned to dinner to the hotel, when Curtis brought out all his agreeable powers, which were not slight, for the edification of Horace, who, after the second bottle of claret, found himself calling his new acquaintance, "My

dear fellow," "Curtis," &c., whilst the latter treated him, the more he observed his character, with greater respect and forbearance. To make a long story short—that very night Horace lost £10 to the Hon. Mr. Curtis, and, with extraordinary hardihood, agreed to accompany him to Brussels on the following day.

CHAPTER XI.

LET not our readers suppose that Horace was, on this occasion, wanting in ability, for it is certain that the facility with which men of almost every character are induced to lose their money, is most remarkable and unaccountable.

Deficient he was, to a certain extent, of a knowledge of the world, or he would not so easily have been led, in a place like Ostend, to play with a total stranger, who, himself acknowledged that he was running away from his creditors. But, in some degree, it was this very frankness on his part which

disarmed Horace's suspicions, and, though the loss of £10 was to him a serious thing, he blamed himself, as most do, on these occasions, little guessing that he had been duped and cheated by a man, who, had he known his character, he would not have addressed, and who was not only a perfect billiard-player, but an accomplished swindler, and unblushing cheat.

The next day saw Horace and his friend *en route* to Brussels; and, although Curtis endeavoured during the journey, with practised skill, to sift Horace as to his private affairs, family, &c., he found him, to his disappointment, on this subject invulnerable.

All he could gather from him was, that he intended making some stay at Brussels, and, in the spring, proceeding to some one or other of the German baths. Curtis immediately mentioned Homburg, for that place had been the scene of some of his most successful operations, and he wished, if possible, now that he resolved on attaching himself to Horace, for the sole purpose of getting his money, to guide his steps thither.

Of course, nothing decided was settled, but the picture which Curtis artfully drew of the place, inwardly made Horace resolve to go there, which was all the former wanted. On arriving at Brussels, Curtis proposed that they should take lodgings together. This Horace at first objected to, but as usual was overcome, and in two days, our hero found himself the joint occupant of a handsome *salon* with two bed-rooms adjoining, one for himself, and the other for the Honourable Gentleman, whose attention to him grew more and more remarkable every day.

By slow degrees, and with cautious steps, Horace was introduced to the associates of Curtis, who little by little drew him on to play, first for small sums at *ecarté*, and then at games of chance. Wanting in firmness, and the force of habit urging him on, all Horace's better nature seemed to have deserted him, and that which he at first shunned as dangerous and immoral, soon became both necessary for his amusement,

and pleasing to his mind. Unfortunately situated as he was—without introduction to a better class of society, and no one to befriend him, it is not to be wondered at that he at last gave himself up entirely to the dissipated life of Curtis, who became—sad to say—his familiar companion.

They were both to be constantly seen, haunting the cafés with which Brussels abounds, or returning late at night arm in arm from the theatres to attend some supper, when cards were sure to be introduced; the consequences were but too apparent. In less than two months, Horace had lost upwards of £200 at billiards, and *ecarté*, and felt himself one morning under the disagreeable necessity of acknowledging to himself, that he had not a shilling left, nor could he expect a remittance from England for some months.

Dissipation almost always makes people reckless, and this circumstance of being completely run out, which a few months before would have alarmed Horace consider-

ably, now caused him scarcely any inquietude. He consulted Curtis, who, with great generosity, advanced him £50, and advised him not to play more, asking him in the same breath, whether he was going to a supper to be given by an actress, a friend of Horace's, that very evening.

"Certainly!" said Horace, "of course I am. You don't suppose because I am hard up, I am not going to amuse myself!"

"No," replied Curtis, laughing, "that would be making bad worse; only, my good fellow, keep clear of the cards, you are out of luck," added this accomplished man and sincere friend to the unsuspecting Horace.

This sort of life lasted the whole winter. Horace, though in reality ashamed of himself, had not resolution to shake off the fetters which held him; and, plunging deeper and deeper into folly and dissipation, seemed likely to be entirely ruined. The late hours he kept and the quantity of wine he was now in the continual habit of imbib-

ing, had their effect on his appearance; for he lost that fresh and noble aspect he formerly possessed, and became thin and careworn, and in some degree careless of his exterior.

But the ill effects to the outward man, though apparent and deplorable enough, were nothing in comparison to the ravages which these habits must make on the mind; and Horace, when he indulged in self-examination—which was not often—was startled to find that his thoughts and ideas, which formerly were quite of a different nature, were now all of a low, vicious, and degrading cast. He did, however, make attempts at reformation, shut himself up for days, and commenced a course of reading—a sure resource, and his great delight in former times—but it would not do; the necessity of excitement and the demon love of play had completely overpowered him, and he struggled helplessly with his fate.

It was impossible from the utterly different natures of Horace and Curtis that any

real friendship could exist between them, and the latter, though originally a gentleman, had so long been the associate of the degraded, that he had lost that real polish and unmistakeable bearing which characterize a man of honour. But he had of late become necessary, in more ways than one, to Horace, who owed him money—that most disagreeable though binding tie between man and man—and he foolishly did nothing to extricate himself from his dangerous position; though, had he reflected, he must have seen clearly the abyss on which he stood, and made a vigorous effort for his escape. Thus the winter wore away. May arrived with all its beauty in full force, and Horace, yielding to Curtis's oft-repeated request, left Brussels for Homburg; accompanied by the latter, and a French actress, nominally the property of the former, but in reality a secret friend and plotting confidant of Curtis.

CHAPTER XII.

THE object of Curtis and the infamous female, who had connected herself with Horace, and who daily familiarized his mind more and more with vice, of course was not that he should play at the public tables at Homburg—they merely wished to get him there, more to themselves, and thus surely to effect his ruin, considering that, amongst such a nest of swindlers and profligates as were constantly assembled, their proceedings would be less likely to be noticed than elsewhere,—the journey was performed with rapidity. Horace had never ascended the

Rhine before, and, although the words, "how beautiful," often escaped his lips as the steamer slowly bore them up the lovely river, both the state of his mind, and the society he was in, prevented anything like a thorough enjoyment of the scene. So true it is, that those who transgress the laws of nature and society, are justly rendered unfit for that most divine of all gratifications, alike open to the humble peasant, and the man of noble birth, a grateful admiration of the stupendous and magnificent works of the Creator.

These scenes, however, have their effect, limited indeed, upon all; the most daring pause, behold, and are bound within themselves to feel and acknowledge, the immensity of His power, and the insignificance of their petty scheming here below.

Though Horace had passed through the ordeal of some few years of a military life, which is certainly fraught with many temptations, and had never been intemperate, the state of excitement in which he now

lived caused him by degrees to commence this evil habit, and, though he hated spirituous liquors, and never touched them, the quantity of wine which he now daily imbibed quite unfitted his mind for sober reflections, and drowned alike in him care for the present, or anxiety as to the future. In short, he was a dreadful example of a neglected son, falling by degrees, from man's high estate to that of a sensual being, careless and unrefined. His principles, indeed, often revolted, but he wanted that resolution without which principles are useless, without which no man, however great his qualities, can be said to be useful to others, or to be master of himself.

In the short space of six months, Horace had so changed, even in appearance, that few would have known him ; alas ! he scarcely knew himself. Handsome always, and dressed with that peculiar neatness and elegance which render a really well-bred Englishman the admiration of all foreigners, not excluding the French themselves, few

young men could have previously competed with Horace Grantham. Now, in adopting the vicious propensities and evil habits of Curtis, the outward man had not escaped, and he looked both low and dissipated. His manner, formerly dignified and thoughtful, was now hurried and frivolous; and his expression, which had been the great charm of his face, was entirely changed.

Let moralists and philosophers decide how far our hero was deserving of censure, what degree of fortitude he ought to have shown, whether the temptation and situation warranted the position he was now in; for ourselves, it is our decided opinion that Horace, though much to blame, was far less guilty than his father, who, had he performed his duty, and cultivated the impulses for good, which all this while lay dormant, yet still existing in his nature, would not only have strengthened the resolution, but fortified the virtues, of his son.

The season had not yet fully begun at Homburg; and, though crowds of people

flocked with horrid eagerness around the gaming-tables, which at this den of vice are constantly in motion, from one year's end to another without cessation, the gardens and rooms were at first but thinly filled. Towards the end of June, hosts of English began to arrive, and Horace recognised several of his countrymen, though, indeed, he shunned their society, and spent the whole of his time with Curtis, and the Frenchwoman before alluded to.

They lived at an hotel, and, as Curtis commenced playing, though not deeply, the moment they arrived, and had won considerable sums, the innkeeper had no apprehensions as to the result, and treated them with courtesy and attention. In places of this sort, not only your landlord, but all the tradespeople, are constantly on the "*qui vive*" to ascertain the result of each stranger's operations at the gaming-table, successful or otherwise, and act accordingly.

As Horace was by no means deficient in observation, he did not fail to notice, though

at first he did not much regard it, that Curtis—although he seemed to be well-known by many English, was universally shunned by them all. Nay, on several occasions, he had seen certain looks and “shrugging of the shoulders” on the part of his countrymen, which at last, though in no decided way, slightly aroused his suspicions, and led him to imagine that he had perhaps been hasty in making a friend or rather a companion of a man, whose only passport seemed to be his own assurance, and of whose former career he was totally ignorant.

Still, Horace had the noble quality common to all young people of generous minds (and pity in one sense that it is so; for, however great in itself, a want of suspicion certainly does lead the young into many false and dangerous positions), a trusting confidence in others—comparing such with himself, to whom a dishonourable action, anything low, or thoroughly bad, was impossible; he found it most difficult to imagine the contrary of anybody, much less,

upon reflection, of Curtis, who had taken care to impose upon Horace by his sham generosity and carelessness of manner. Moreover, had he not advised him to avoid play? Horace forgot that he owed him at least £150 lost at cards, and £50 besides at billiards, &c., and that even now they played nightly, when he generally found himself a considerable loser.

That very night Curtis entered his room, whilst Horace was ruminating thus on his position. The honourable gentleman was in high spirits; and, throwing himself on a chair, thus soliloquized:—

“Immortal gods! What a thing is luck! Horace, my boy, where have you been? you’ve missed such a sight. Louise and myself in your absence have all but cleared out those rascals. How they did stare, and smile, and nod; the fat *croupier* actually got excited, when, trusting to my good fortune, and the divinations of the fair Louise, I commenced playing first with gold, and then with *rouleaux*, my boy. And last

not least, here they are—only 250 of them!” said Curtis, displaying an enormous heap of glittering gold to the astonished Horace.

“Why, how did you manage that?” said he, “Curtis, I must say I think it very unfair of you to advise me not to play, and then to come here and parade your own good fortune before me. I tell you, I have received remittances from England, and shall certainly try my luck to-morrow.”

“Nonsense, my good fellow;” said Curtis, who now, though rather intoxicated, saw the mistake he had made, and repented him of his folly; “such luck seldom turns up. You’ll lose all your money to a certainty. You had much better give it to me, and let me play for you?”

“Much obliged to you,” said Horace, “I shall do no such thing. Which game do you like best? By best, I mean which gives one the finest chance of success?”

“Oh, the *trente et quarante*, decidedly, particularly with only one ‘*après*,’ but I advise you not to try at all. If you *must* play,

stick to the *ecarté*, at which game you play well, and have at least equal chances for your money."

"Well, you are a cool fellow," replied Horace, who somehow this evening was determined to let Curtis know he was not so entirely under his dominion as he suspected, "You have won upwards of £200 of me. Is that your idea of 'equal chances' and good play?"

"Well," answered Curtis, who now had fully regained possession of his faculties, "somebody *must* win, and I must say, that if you had won that sum of me, I should not have thought it extraordinary, or necessary to remark on it, as it now pleases you to do. Have I asked you for the money, or in any way inconvenienced you? It's rather hard, after that, to be thus spoken to," said he, assuming the character of the injured party!

"Don't be annoyed, Curtis," said Horace; "all you say is true. All I meant was, that if I am not more fortunate at the tables than I have been with you at *ecarté*,

I had better give up the ghost at once. But come, to put you in spirits, try this champagne, which will cool your head this baking hot evening. It looks like a storm. Is Louise coming home shortly?"

"Heaven knows," said the Honourable, who seemed pacified, "I'll go out and see."

"Well!" roared Horace after him, from the top of the stairs, "recollect you both sup here at eleven to-night. Adieu!"

"All right!" cried Curtis, who, intent upon his plans, rushed to the rooms to seek Louise.

He soon found that fair and frail specimen of her sex, surrounded by a bevy of Frenchmen, chattering, drinking, flirting, laughing, and playing all at once, with that flow of spirits, forced or natural, which seldom deserts that mercurial people under any circumstances, for any length of time.

"Louise," he whispered, "come hither!" She obeyed his summons, and they proceeded at once to the shady recesses of the grounds behind the building.

"That ass, Grantham," he began.

"Hush!" said she, "do not talk so loud, there are many people walking about—"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed he angrily, "Listen!"

"Grantham has resolved to play. Now if he does, he will soon lose all his money, and not to us. What is to be done? He himself told me, not ten minutes ago, that he had received money from England, though to what amount I know not."

"Oh!" said she, if he *will* play, ask him for the money he owes you."

"No, foolish one," said Curtis, "that might make him angry, and cause him to cut our acquaintance—not at all a desirable event—as I consider him fool enough to keep us both as long as we honour him with our patronage, eh, Louise?"

"True," said Louise, in reply, "let us go to-night and win a large stake at *ecarté*, which," added she, laughing, "may, per-

haps, prevent the possibility of his playing much to-morrow. You understand?"

"Perfectly," continued Curtis, "but I left him in so strange a frame of mind, that we must be cautious. Perhaps, we had better let him play, and win something. He will then stop, and commence a fresh score with us at that most perfect of all games for an ignoramus like him, *ecarté*."

"Do what you will," said Louise, "only do not let him escape. I confess I have observed a change lately. He does not seem so utterly unsuspicious and reckless as at Brussels."

"No," replied the Honourable," and that is what alarms me. I fear he notices that our position here is not quite the thing, which, in the crowd of a capital like Brussels, escaped him."

"Perhaps; but come," quickly said the lady, shivering, "I can't stay here all night; in fact, I can't see what you brought me here for."

Silly woman," growled Curtis, "to let

you know both of my suspicions as to Grantham's frame of mind, and the fact of money being in his possession, which *must* and *shall* be *ours*. We meet at eleven in his rooms. Adieu—or stay,” said he, following her. “I will try my fortune again before supper.”

They entered, took their seats, and were soon totally absorbed in the game, forgetful both of Horace, and their villanous intentions against him.

Horace occupied the interval in writing to his father. He hid nothing from him, explained his position, his inability to pay Curtis, unless assisted, and his wish to do so—when he promised entirely to give up cards, which he felt he could do, and really intended. In fact, he was in one of those moods, those moments of happy resolutions—which come occasionally across all, who, having embarked in the slippery paths of dissipation and gambling sometimes feel obliged to pause, and are compelled, as if by force, to meditate on reformation—how seldom, in-

deed, to act! How much depends on this position, on the way in which the friends of the unhappy one, or his relations, when appealed to, behave! How many could have been saved, nay, would have been so, by a kind word in season, a generous forgiveness of the past, and advice for the future! On the contrary, if a man is spurned, condemned, and ill-treated, merely on the commission of those follies which are more or less common to all, it but hardens him in his career, and urges him onwards to more folly and deeper scenes of guilt.

Horace felt a sense of shame in being obliged thus to acknowledge his errors, which he freely did, yet, when he had finished it did him good, for it made him think, and he inwardly resolved not to touch a card again, till he received his father's reply.

Great was the astonishment, therefore, of the noble Curtis, and fair Louise, when that night, Horace, with wonderful generosity, insisted upon their drinking as much champagne

as they pleased, at his expense; but, resolutely refused to go near the *ecarté* table, anxiously spread by his well-intentioned friends.

"No, no," he gaily said, "I refuse point blank. I am not in the humour for it. Take some more wine, Louise—Curtis has had plenty. Let him go to sleep—No, give him a cigar."

"Ah, well," sighed Louise. "My dear Horace, what shall we do, as you won't play?"

"Make love, to be sure," said our hero, who felt quite pleased with himself at this, his first conquest over his inclinations.

"Well," said she, "let us go out on the balcony."

Horace lit his cigar; and, as they left Curtis asleep on the sofa, so let us leave them to the enjoyment of their own conversation, and a heavenly star-light night.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE next morning our hero was lounging in the comfortable and well-appointed reading-room of the establishment, with that listless air, which continued late hours, and too much wine, always impart to the appearance, when a gentleman asked him to let him have the "Times" newspaper, which he held in his hand, as soon as he had done with it.

Horace thought he had never heard so pleasing a voice. He looked up, and beheld a handsome man of about his father's age, above the middle height, with a most cheerful and intelligent countenance.

He handed him the paper, with a slight bow, which the gentleman returned with a smile, and retired to the window with his prize, for is not the "Times" a prize indeed to any intelligent man abroad? Horace's eyes followed him, and, as he scanned the noble features and expression of our new acquaintance, he felt, he knew not what, a sort of attraction, and interest, we suppose to know who he was, and be better acquainted with him.

The face of the stranger was not decidedly handsome, but was yet infinitely more agreeable than many far handsomer. The eyes were clear and prominent, the forehead high, with a slightly Roman nose, and well-formed mouth, whilst not a gray hair as yet tinged his wavy dark brown hair. His muscular though slight frame, indicated strength and activity; whilst his movements, and clear, healthy complexion, showed plainly that, although he was on the wrong side of fifty, temperance and care had met with their reward, and that his body as well

as his mind were in the full possession of scarcely diminished powers.

But his chief charm lay in the benevolent and encouraging—if we may use such a term—expression of his face, whilst a lurking twinkle in the corner of the eye denoted to a close observer, that wit and humour, were not wanting, on proper occasions in his character.

Horace somehow could not take his eyes from this all-perfect man, who totally unconscious of the admiration he had excited, continued the perusal of his paper, a quiet smile, or a shake of the head indicating at intervals that he had a quick apprehension of what he read, and was quite capable of forming an opinion, for at least his own satisfaction—thereon. Horace now went off to the gambling-tables, which have been described so often that it is not necessary again to attempt it; suffice it to say, that now the season was in full force. Russian counts, English nobility, German bankers, Jews, Poles, French and Dutch, male and

female, were here promiscuously heaped together, all, of whatever rank, of equal importance in the eyes of the proprietor.

Curtis and Louise were seated, as usual, in their places, pricking the cards at roulette, a sort of infatuation by which people imagine they know when to put down their money—a complete absurdity, and only a shade better occupation than the actual play itself, which invariably follows: when, if fortune befriends them, the winner immediately lays it down to his acute calculations; if not, the excuse is that there was something wrong, and such or such a number *ought* to have come up, but somehow *did* not. Horace had resolved not to play till he received his father's reply, which, if enclosing the money to pay Curtis, would set him free, and enable him to proceed elsewhere, if he thought fit. He was, in some degree, tired of himself, his present life, and all around; and, though he looked forward to no settled plan of action, he would willingly have welcomed any excuse to leave

Homburg, and his associates for ever; however, situated as he was, wait he *must*, and therefore wait he *did*.

Somehow, that day at the dinner at five, at the *table d'hôte* of the establishment, he found himself separated from his companions, and seated next to the very gentleman who had attracted his regards in the morning. Englishmen who travel abroad, get rid wonderfully quick of that impenetrable reserve, that ridiculous stiffness of manner, which characterize so many of our nation, particularly the squirearchy, or men who live at home at ease.

Horace and the stranger of course soon conversed together, and the former was not disappointed. He was quite charmed with his new acquaintance, a thorough gentleman, and apparently a man of the world. His conversation was both animated and instructive, and his remarks on those around, whilst they showed him capable of much humour, were totally devoid of anything coarse or ill-natured.

Before dinner was over, Horace became quite infected with the pleasant, though quiet gaiety of his neighbour, and, for the first time for many a long day, he felt interested, and was taken away from himself as it were.

“I am glad to see you do not play,” observed our new acquaintance to Horace; “of all vices, it unquestionably is the most degrading, the most fatal to the peace of mind, and well-being of man. A gambler lives but for gambling. All other emotions, nay passions, are dead within him, and he becomes, by the constant concentration of his faculties on this one infamous practice, which no head can stand, at last incapable of resistance; should he not by some fortuitous circumstance, be stopped in his career, he is sure to come to misery, disgrace, and wretchedness.”

“Ah!” said Horace, “you must not praise without knowing me. I fear I do not merit your congratulations. Certainly, I have

not yet ventured to play in public, but I cannot say as much for my private life.

“Well, well,” cheerfully replied the gentleman—we are all fallible, and have human imperfections, and evil has reigned with temptation and ignorance at hand to assist in the ruin of those who are weak and unfortunate. But you will pardon one, who, though a stranger, takes the liberty of giving advice, in consideration of our different age, which advice is—never to allow yourself for the future, under any circumstances, to gamble at any game, whatever. The resolution once made, and carried into effect, will enable you fully to conquer any bad habits you may have been led into; and, believe me, you will congratulate yourself for having listened to my admonitions; but I never play the moralist if I can avoid it, and I know from experience, that advice, to be taken by the young, must be both carefully and honestly given; persuasion preferred to command; and the hearer should, if possible, also have a conviction

that the person who addresses him speaks from a real feeling of friendship, if not affection. Now our acquaintance is so short, that I feel really ashamed of myself for my hardihood, and cry your pardon—I see we are left alone—I always smoke a cigar after dinner—do you smoke?”

“Yes,” said Horace, who felt less and less inclined to separate from his new companion, “I do ; among the rest of my bad practices, I reckon that.”

“Say not so!” said the gentleman, as they seated themselves upon the terrace, in the rear of the rooms, and the *garçon* brought coffee. “In moderation, (that all-powerful word,) a cigar, like everything else in this world, is an excellent thing, and quite an allowable luxury. It is the abuse and not the use of this world’s commodities which ruins men— “why,” added he, laughingly, “I smoke, drink, have made love in my day, nay, played like you, and, probably, done many worse acts in my life. But, my experience has taught me many things, and

among others that moderation, in every respect, is not only necessary to the enjoyment of the thing itself, but the only means by which that enjoyment can be prolonged, and the healthy state of both mind and body, preserved. I hope I do not look very dissipated," continued he, sily, to Horace.

"No," said the latter in reply, "Nobody indeed, could accuse you of that. You seem to enjoy excellent health and spirits."

"I do, thank God!" said our new friend. "I have had my share of misfortunes, too," and he sighed deeply, turning away his head.

It was only for a moment—yet, in this brief period, Horace knew that he spoke to a man of deep feeling—his heart, naturally open to sympathy, felt for him, and the attraction which at first drew him towards him increased every moment. The conversation now turned upon general subjects, and a more agreeable, and entertaining man, in Horace's opinion, never existed than his new acquaintance, for he had that rare faculty, so seldom met with, in men of his

age in contact with much younger ones—of not letting his superiority become too apparent; and thus creating that repugnance to ask or receive advice, which is usually observed in opposite cases.

Horace was most anxious to ascertain his companion's name, and, on their reaching the hotel, was saved further affliction on the subject by the gentleman's handing him a card, whilst he spoke as follows:—

“Sir, I hate etiquette, and I know you were thinking of my name. I acknowledge,” added he, with a graceful bow, “I am anxious to know yours.”

“Exchange is no robbery,” said Horace, much pleased, presenting his card, and shaking hands with his new friend, as he bade him adieu.

On the card was printed in plain and simple characters,

“MR. CECIL.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next morning Horace awoke refreshed in spirits, and anxious to know more of Mr. Cecil. He determined to visit him at his hotel, which was some distance from the one they inhabited, and accordingly proceeded thither. He was at once admitted, and found Mr. Cecil writing.

Horace at once perceived, by a rapid survey of the apartment and appointments, the books, &c., that lay on the side table, the style of the whole thing, that his new friend was a gentleman. It is not meant by this to insinuate that no man can be a gen-

tleman who has not that fastidious neatness about his person, dress, and habits, which certainly characterizes most of the class, yet it is a certain indication of a man's having lived in good society, and been accustomed to good style, when, in adversity he is as particular on all these points as if he had his valet to attend on him, which that adversity or other causes may have deprived him of.

All these signs were remarkable about Mr. Cecil; and, as he rose and welcomed Horace, who knew nothing of his family or circumstances, the latter settled it in his own mind that he had made the acquaintance, not only of an agreeable and instructive, but a well-born and highly-bred man.

"Good morning, my dear sir," said he to Horace, in his clear and cheerful voice, the tone of which made the listener's heart glad with joy. "I am indeed happy to see you," and he looked as if he felt what he said. "Do you drink the waters?"

"I do; though I can only allow myself a

fortnight longer here. What a lovely morning it was!"

"Was it, indeed?" observed Horace, who had now seated himself. "I rise late—though it is, I admit, a sin to acknowledge it."

"Nay, never say so," quickly returned Mr. Cecil; "acknowledgment of an error is always the first step to improvement. So, my young friend, I shall hope to see you at the Springs to-morrow morning, at half-past six at latest. Eh?"

Horace promised, for he felt he should meet Mr. Cecil there.

"I hope I am not interrupting you," said Horace, after a pause, as he observed the last number of the "Quarterly" open, near the elbow of his friend.

"By no means. *I expected you,*" returned Mr. Cecil, looking Horace hard in the face. "In all places, if my engagements admit of it, I devote a certain number of hours daily to reading and writing, and think such a *régime* becomes more necessary

in a place like this, where the ill effects of idleness, trifling, and dissipation are so very conspicuous. Besides, with me, it is in some degree constitutional. I cannot be idle. I abhor lounging; and find that the division of one's day into compartments, as it were, for different pursuits, the best way of employing time, which I do not, like many others here, devote to gambling, drinking, and frivolous conversation. I fear, Mr. Grantham, you will consider me rather old-fashioned, but so it is. I am obliged to write a good deal now," said he, slightly lowering his voice; "but to-day I was thinking of giving myself a half holiday, as the weather is so fine, and taking a long ramble among the hills. Are you much of a pedestrian?"

"Why," replied Horace, "I used to be so, but," continued he, with a sigh, "all my habits lately have become so changed, that I absolutely do not know what taking a walk means; and, though I have been here

two months, I have never been beyond the town and gardens."

"Shocking, shocking!" returned Mr. Cecil, with a smile; "the scenery here is beautiful, and the air on the mountains is most delicious and invigorating. I have had many a ramble since I came, alone, and can, if you are inclined, take you a lovely walk to-day."

"I shall be only too happy," said Horace, joyfully; but just at that moment he recollected he had an engagement with Curtis and Louise at two o'clock. "I have an appointment, but will go instantly, and see if I cannot get off it," added he, seizing his hat.

"Pray don't inconvenience yourself, Mr. Grantham," said Mr. Cecil. But Horace was already half way down stairs, and arrived in five minutes almost breathless in Curtis's room.

"I cannot dine with you at the two o'clock *table d'hôte* to-day, Curtis," he began.

"Hallo! What's the matter with you

now?" said that individual, putting back the curtains of a French bed in the corner of the room, for he had not yet risen, although it was one o'clock. "Why not?"

"Because I am going to take a walk," was the reply.

"The devil you are! That's something new. Well, I suppose you don't want me to go with you," answered Curtis.

"Certainly not," quickly replied Horace. "I only came to tell you, and now I am off."

He then returned to Mr. Cecil, and, in half-an-hour afterwards, they started—having arranged to dine together late on their return. Mutually pleased, for Horace had made a most favourable impression on the mind of his new acquaintance, they had both during their walk, ample time and opportunity, for cultivating a further intimacy, and the happy influence of which on our hero was apparent in his joyous look and anxious conversation.

"Well, come, say, have I not done you a service?" gaily cried Cecil, as they reached

an eminence far above the town of Homburg called "Luther's Eiche," from which an extensive view of surpassing beauty can be enjoyed. "What a prospect! I have seldom seen anything finer, but it wants water, without which no view can approach the perfect."

"I quite agree with you," said Horace, "I was disappointed with the Rhine."

"So are many people," replied Mr. Cecil, "but it is because they expect too much. The Rhine is very grand in places, though I confess I prefer many scenes on the Danube, and in Scotland."

"You have travelled much, then," said Horace.

"Why I can't say that I am exactly a Mungo Park, or a Captain Cook," continued Mr. Cecil, laughing, "but I have visited most countries of Europe, and have also when young been in America. I am also an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of nature, the magnificent, and the sublime; and, in my opinion, none of the sensual pleasures can, or should, equal the

gratification to be derived from such sources. I am no cynic, nor do I undervalue or object to the amusements of the day, or the pursuits of pleasure in moderation, but I never could have a good opinion of the head or heart of a man who entirely, engrossed by such employments, becomes callous to the noble aspirations kindled by the contemplation of the magnificent works of the Deity."

"No, truly," said Horace, who listened with admiration to this energetic language, "and yet how few there are, who prefer fine scenery, and a country life to towns, and the amusements common to them!"

"It is so," replied Mr. Cecil; "that is because the natural impulses of most men from the moment of their birth are checked: fashion, custom, and, in this respect, even education, all assert their claims to warp and to contract the mind, and it is too true, that most young men at your age, consider an interview with their tailors of more importance and calculated to call forth more

real energy on their parts, than the contemplation of a fine picture, or a noble scene.

“Believe me,” said Horace eagerly, “I am not one of these,” for he feared, greatly, and was already jealous of Mr. Cecil’s good and bad opinion.

“Decidedly not; my young friend, nor do you imagine on your part, that though I speak and feel strongly on these subjects, I can make no allowances for the follies and temptations of youth. I trust I am philosopher enough, to know that all are not born with the same natures, that all do not enjoy the same advantages of birth, parentage, or education; or go through the same routine of life. This reflection should always stop a man in his decisions on the actions of others, for no one knows, however great he flatters himself his strength may be, how he would have acted in the situation of another, with the same temptations, constitution, and powers of intellect. This is the grand mistake that many would-be moralists and monitors make—and a fatal mistake it is—

When called on to form a judgment of the actions of our fellow-men, most people merely look to the actions themselves, whereas unquestionably the amount of blame or praise entirely depends upon the advantages, disadvantages, and temptations, which the person may have enjoyed, or undergone.

“In fact, from this circumstance, I consider it the grossest injustice to condemn any one, particularly the young, however bad the case may seem, without a perfect knowledge of every circumstance connected with him—his education, previous mode of life, and position. Add to which, the character of the parents, natural powers, and constitution both of mind and body; must be duly canvassed, and, even then, though I could heartily condemn the fault, I consider the best policy for reformation to be, invariably, good example, kindness, and affection, greatly preferable, in my mind, to either precept or force.”

How soothing these words were to Horace can easily be imagined; these charitable

and noble sentiments gave him fresh confidence ; and, as they bent their steps homewards, where they did not arrive till nearly dark, he had more and more occasion to admire his friend, whose varied powers of mind, and general knowledge on all subjects, rendered him indeed a rare companion, and most useful guide, to one in the critical and most dangerous position of Horace.

During one of their rambles, Mr. Cecil mentioned to Horace that he had known his father many years ago, and asked after him.

Horace replied briefly, and then the subject dropped, for Mr. Cecil at once perceived that there existed, as he suspected from his knowledge of the elder Mr. Grantham's character and habits, no good feeling between them, much less that perfect understanding and mutual dependence on each other, which should subsist between a father and son.

This, in some measure, excused Horace, in Mr. Cecil's opinion, for his intimacy with Louise and Curtis, which he had, of course

noticed, and satisfied him that those failings which were most apparent in his young friend's character, arose quite as much, or more, from his position and circumstances, than from his own choice, or evil nature.

Horace had felt much tempted when Mr. Cecil mentioned his father's name, to make him fully acquainted with all his feelings on the subject, but a natural repugnance to speak ill, which he necessarily must do, of Mr. Grantham, deterred him. This may be often observed in sons of good dispositions and noble minds, and their forbearance is but ill repaid by their selfish parents, who, often in the enjoyment of all the good things of this world, robust health, and an exalted position, are totally regardless of even the "whereabouts," much less the *actual condition* of their sons, whom they yet consider bound, when they do meet, to treat them (albeit they have not fulfilled their own duty) with the same respect and deference, though they ask not for affection, as if they had done all that Nature points clearly out they should do, and for the neglect of which they will

most certainly hereafter be justly condemned.

The silence of Horace, however, was nearly as explanatory to Mr. Cecil, as any information would have been. A keen judge of human nature, he felt sure that one of Horace's character would, if he could, have been the first to acknowledge, and speak in terms of gratitude and affection, of a deserving parent; and, whilst he tacitly praised his good taste and generosity in avoiding the subject, he pitied his position, and resolved to befriend him.

Mr. Cecil and the elder Mr. Grantham had not met for many years, but the former was perfectly aware of the character, habits, and pursuits of the latter. He also knew that he had married again, which circumstance alone is generally considered a sufficient excuse, in this world, for the total neglect of a former family, though in the present case, as Mr. Grantham often expressed himself, "He thanked God he had not any children by his second marriage to hamper him!"

CHAPTER XV.

FROM this time forward, the intimacy which had thus sprung up between Mr. Cecil and Horace Grantham seemed likely to ripen into a real and lasting friendship. Curtis and the French lady became seriously alarmed, as Horace and his companion were to be seen daily going through the town early, or returning late from their rambles, or seated together in some shady corner of the gardens, in earnest or cheerful conversation, for Mr. Cecil, though always sensible, was not always grave and philosophical. He had travelled far, lived much in the world,

and having an excellent memory, possessed a fund of anecdote always ready, which lost nothing by being related in humorous and terse language ; so that, whilst his conversation and advice both greatly benefited and interested Horace, his spirits became animated by the example of Mr. Cecil's cheerful and contented frame of mind.

His friend's observations upon men and manners, the customs of people and nations, always instructive, displayed the well-read, but not pedantic man ; and his quickness and ready decision in the every-day affairs of life, showed him to be both a valuable friend and useful companion.

Horace was himself surprised at the change which had thus suddenly taken place in his habits, and, though he did not reason very closely, he felt, in every respect, better and happier, and more firmly resolved to give up his intimacy with Curtis, and the French lady, Mademoiselle Louise. This was not so easy to do as to wish, for Curtis was not by any means one of those

finely-strung sensitive gentlemen, who take a hint, and make themselves scarce, at a short notice. On the contrary, he knew that, as long as Horace owed him money, he held him fast, and he resolved, now that he observed this fresh intimacy, and feared its wholesome results on his victim, to redouble his endeavours, and, if possible, without losing further time, ruin and fleece him outright, and then have done with him.

To effect this, he held many a consultation with Louise, who, now positively detested Horace, owing to his neglect of her, since his knowledge of Mr. Cecil, and was quite ready to aid the unprincipled Curtis, in any scheme, however villanous. They resolved, therefore, on an endeavour to induce Horace to play at the gaming-table, which at least they expected would bring him back to his former habits. If he won, they imagined there would be no difficulty in, somehow or other, transferring the proceeds to themselves; if he lost, their revenge would be gratified, and his position rendered still more helpless and insecure.

Fortune, in some degree favoured their wicked plans, for Mr. Cecil one morning informed Horace that he was obliged to go to Frankfort on business, for a day or two, and did not ask him to accompany him. Much annoyed, Horace took leave of him; and, on returning to his rooms, saw a letter addressed to himself, in his father's handwriting, on the table.

He opened it with anxiety, for, who does not when one's pecuniary affairs, and honourable position are at stake? He read as follows :—

Hertford-street, May-fair,
July 15th, 1848.

My dear Horace—I have received your letter, asking for assistance to pay some gambling debts. I, at once decidedly refuse to advance a penny to you, for this, or any other purpose. You knew your means and position before you left England, and, if you choose to get into bad society, and out-run your income, you are alone to blame—and

must get yourself out of the scrape as you best can.

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS GRANTHAM.

Horace trembled, and, for the first time in his life, a feeling of indignant anger, and disappointed hope, rushed across his mind, as he put down this unfeeling, and most unparental communication. “Yours affectionately,” he repeated, “what can this mean? Is not that indeed adding insult to injury, and, though doubtless I have been criminal and thoughtless, do I really deserve such total neglect and abandonment?”

He sat down, and endeavoured to think calmly. He owed Curtis £200,—he had but £50 in the world, and it wanted at least two months to the period, when another remittance could arrive. Any further appeal to his father was out of the question. His pride revolted at the idea, and he had not a friend in the world, as it was but too true, that his lawful and natural pro-

tector and guardian—his own parent—turned a deaf ear to his entreaty, and refused him either advice or assistance.

As Horace thus sat alone, with the fatal letter in his hand, he seemed like one turned into stone, his flushed cheek, and unsteady eye, bespoke how deeply he felt the conduct of his father, father, indeed, alone in name, for never had this unfeeling, and selfish man performed one duty, or felt one spark of affection for his unfortunate son. At this moment, the young man thought of Mr. Cecil, and a flash of joy, a feeling that there might be yet security for him, came across him, which was as suddenly checked, when he recollected how short had been their acquaintance, and how impossible it was, in consequence, to make his friend a confidant on the occasion. “No,” he repeated, half aloud, “generous and noble as he is, I can have no right to annoy him with my private affairs, and I will not do so. Yet what is to be done? Alas, alas!

my own folly is but too apparent—and ruin—positive ruin—seems inevitable.”

At this moment, Curtis entered the apartment. He immediately perceived that something was wrong, though Horace endeavoured, and, in some measure succeeded, in mastering his agitation, with that quick apprehension with which grief always conceals itself in the presence of one who can have no sympathy with it.

“Well, my boy,” began Curtis, “you look as if you were in league with all the blue devils on earth, this morning, what’s the matter?”

“Oh! nothing,” replied Horace, coolly, for the contrast between the reckless and impertinent manners of Curtis, and those of Mr. Cecil, struck him forcibly with disgust for the former; “nothing, at least of importance—only about money, that’s all,” said he, imprudently.

“Oh! if that’s all,” replied Curtis, “don’t care a curse about the matter. Everybody is subject to that sort of thing, though,

thanks to Monsieur Blanc and Co., I don't feel much anxiety myself on that score. Why I have actually floored them out of £300 since I came. I thought I heard you say the other day you meant to have another shy—why not?"

Fatal moment for Horace. The tempter came, and, worse still, just at the very moment when he, unhinged and desperate, was in no frame of mind to resist temptation, or to argue with himself. No sooner were the words out of the sharper's mouth, than his victim thought seriously of the proposal, and, although he did not reply, half resolved to endeavour by a visit to those tables, which have ruined thousands, to attempt to retrieve his affairs, and get his money back to pay Curtis.

"Well," said he, after a pause, irresolutely, "I don't see why I should not—though I am always so unlucky."

"Devil take it, there you are—never fear said the Honourable. If you do, it's all over with you. Go in; shut your eyes, and

trust to your luck. I never saw a novice who didn't win at starting. It's a dead certainty."

"I wish I could think so," said Horace.

"Never think about it. Nil desperandum," rattled Curtis. "Get *rather* drunk—not too much you know—a *little* lushy, and wait till the evening; at least, I always do, as the nerves are more steady."

"Well, well," said Horace, gloomily, "we shall see. Now I wish to be alone, for I have got an awful headache."

"*Au revoir*," said Curtis. "Do you dine at the rooms as usual? I hope so; for I declare we have not seen you since you became so thick with that pompous old man."

"Curtis," said Horace, angrily, "recollect, if you please, that Mr. Cecil is my friend, and I insist on no allusions being made to him before me."

"Of course, not if you wish it," answered Curtis.

"I not only wish it, Curtis, but I insist

on it," interrupted Horace, who was in no humour to be trifled with, and thought this an excellent opportunity for showing he did not intend to be mastered in all things.

"Don't be alarmed," replied Curtis, "I shall be 'mum' in future. Now, adieu."

Most unfortunate it was for Horace that, at this crisis, his friend Mr. Cecil was absent. Yet, in the frame of mind in which he was, it is most likely, even had he been present, the latter would not have appealed to him, although Mr. Cecil might and would, most probably, have put a stop to his gambling career.

However, this chance was denied him, and our hero, after dining at five, and drinking much wine to drown the upbraidings of his conscience, rushed to his writing desk, filled his pockets with gold, and, accompanied by Curtis and Louise, sat down to make his first essay at the fascinating and dangerous game of *trente et quarante*.

"Go it, my boy," said the Hon. Mr. Curtis to Horace, who, seated between

Louise and that accomplished gentleman, breathlessly awaited the result of each deal, with that thrilling anxiety which gamblers alone know. "It's all right—just lend me five, will you?"

"Here they are," replied our hero, who, having had a tremendous run of good luck, had already more than doubled his original capital of about thirty Napoleons, and began to think with Curtis, and many others, that it was an *absolute certainty*.

"Mon Dieu!" said Louise, "I only wish Horace, we had got you here sooner, I never saw any one play with such luck."

"I think I shall stop now," said Horace, who, though considerably excited by wine, had sufficient sense left to know that luck cannot, and does not, last for ever. "I've won a good stake; let's be off."

"You must be mad," Grantham muttered, Curtis. "With *your* luck I would have broken the bank ere this—red again."

Horace, with lucky carelessness, during this hasty conversation, had left his former

stake of fifteen Napoleons, which he had won, unintentionally on the table. This, doubled by the red again coming up, amounted to sixty ! which he swept into his pocket, and immediately rose from the table, though he could not help stopping to watch the next deal.

“Rouge wins again—again,” said Curtis.
“Where the devil is Grantham gone?”

“Here,” said a voice behind him.

“My dear fellow,” anxiously whispered Curtis, to Horace, “you might have won a fortune, had you stuck to the colour. It came up three times, after you took up your money.”

“Unfortunate, indeed,” replied Horace; “but I have won a hundred and twenty Napoleons, which is quite enough for to-night.”

“Well, all I can say is, you are not the right sort of fellow ; but I never wish a man to play longer than he likes.”

Horace, highly excited, and delighted with his success, ordered a champagne sup-

per for his associates, and, forgetful of himself, Mr. Cecil, his father, and everything else, reeled to bed, to awake late the next morning with a splitting headache, to which even the sight of the glittering Napoleons on his table, hardly reconciled him.

Having collected his scattered senses, and dressed himself, he proceeded to the gardens for the purpose of taking a bath to refresh himself, when he met Curtis, and instantly presented him with one hundred Napoleons, in part payment of the money he owed him. Curtis refused it, but Horace insisted, and felt so joyous and relieved afterwards, that he readily assented to Curtis's proposal to repeat the scenes of yesterday, as he hoped, with similar success.

A certain sense of the impropriety of his conduct haunted him during the day; but it was, he thought, too late to retract, and he drowned reflection by a devoted adherence to champagne at dinner, which, as Curtis remarked, brought him well up to the scratch at about seven o'clock.

He commenced playing for Napoleons only, and his luck was varied; at last he tried a larger stake, and won; then again, and lost.

“Wound up at last, as all are who do not at once quit the fatal scene, he risked ten, and lost again. He now thought of stopping, but the wine he had drunk, and the advice of his companions, proved too much for him, and again ten Napoleons were staked, and again lost. This became serious, and Horace showed by his manner and trembling voice his dreadful anxiety, and inward consternation. Fortune continued adverse, and, after several more attempts, and the loss of fifty Napoleons, he determined to play no more, and proceeded to drown his mortification in champagne with Curtis and Louise, who had anxiously watched his proceedings throughout the whole evening.

Who that has ever experienced the horrid pang of conscience, the utter prostration of the mind which follows serious loss at play, cannot but picture to himself the feelings of

Horace on this occasion. He had not lost, certainly, in the long run, as he was still seventy Napoleons to the good, but the loss he had sustained served to show him how easy it was to lose, and to shake his previously formed hopes of success for the future. Still he argued for himself, “Curtis *must* be paid, and, if I can only by good fortune win sufficient to do so, I will never go near the horrid spot again”—and he really meant it, not being aware of the insurmountable difficulties which obstruct the path of those, who once having formed a passion for play, find it impossible to retrace their steps, however much their conscience and better feelings prompt them to do so.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next night saw Horace, feverish and pale, with trembling hands, again at his post—again exhibiting the same anxiety, the same torture, or eager or unnatural joy.

He entered the magnificent *salon* at about eight o'clock. He had, on this occasion, imbibed even more wine than on the two previous days, and his appearance, even from this short period of dissipation, had considerably changed. He felt so nervous, and altogether wretched, that he inwardly resolved this time, to hasten his good or evil

fortune, and by staking a large sum, to know his fate at once. Curtis, who, this evening was positively quite intoxicated, had not yet entered the room, when Horace, with desperate resolution, half shut eyes, and beating heart, pulled a handful of gold from his pocket, and left it on the red—he won—bound as if by a spell, he left it down—he won—again, again, the deal proceeded. Our hero did not move, but gazed heavily on the pile of gold before him. “*Le jeu est fait,*” drawled the *croupier*, looking at Horace, as if to know whether he meant to change his stake. Horace nodded his head, and felt as if he was about to fall to the earth—the deal proceeded—Heavens! what does he hear!! “rouge gagne! red again—he wins,” said a number of people, who remarked the enormous heap of gold, which belonged to Horace; whose face now relaxed into a smile; as the *croupier*, with his wooden rake counted the gold, and proceeded at once to hand him several rouleaux, as the shortest method of settling accounts between them.

At this moment, Curtis came noiselessly to the table, and, as he entered, caught the eye of Horace, who, looking at him steadily, now felt his time was come, that he was at last set free from that intolerable bondage, that overwhelming load—a debt of honour. Something whispered to Horace, excited as he was, at this moment, that Curtis had played him false, a feeling of resentment, almost hatred, which he could not account for filled his breast, and, as he handed him one hundred more Napoleons, which all but a few pounds, settled the debt between them, he proudly said, “There is your money, Mr. Curtis, and I am most happy to have the opportunity of settling all our scores at once, and I hope for ever ”

“Confound it, man,” said Curtis, who was too drunk to notice the expression of Horace’s countenance, or he would not have had the courage to proceed, “don’t be so infernally civil; after such luck as yours, you might offer a fellow some discount—I think—but how much did you win, eh, old

fellow?" said he, familiarly putting his hand towards the breast-pocket of Horace's coat, for his waistcoat could not contain the gold he had won."

"Pray, sir," quickly replied Horace, "what can that be to you? I have paid you your money, and beg you will keep your distance, or take the consequences."

Curtis had just wit enough left to see he had gone too far, so he mumbled something, and, thanking Horace for the money, proceeded to the table for the purpose of losing or increasing it, as quickly as possible. Horace returned to his room, and, with trembling eagerness, counted his money, which, after the payment to Curtis, amounted to one hundred and seventy Napoleons. His good fortune, however, had roused the demon of evil within him, and, though he resolutely lit a cigar, and paced up and down for half an hour outside the rooms, congratulating himself on his good fortune, he soon afterwards found himself at the tables, attracted against his will and

unable to resist the dreadful temptation which dragged him on.

He, however, was resolved to play high no more, and fancied, as many others do, that they have sufficient resolution, with a pocket full of gold, to play for a small stake. At first he kept to this, but luck ran dead against him ; and he found himself, by degrees, become again agitated and heated, as he put down at last twenty Napoleons, and held his breath whilst he waited for the decisive word. He lost !

At this instant, he heard a well-known voice behind him, which said—

“ Do not play more, the luck is against you ; let us walk round the gardens.”

He turned, and beheld his friend, Mr. Cecil.

Heartily ashamed of himself, with a blush and sudden start, Horace Grantham felt ready to sink into the earth, but replied in the affirmative ; and, putting on his hat, they passed through the back entrance on to the terrace.

Horace did not speak; he so well knew Mr. Cecil's opinions about gambling, and had himself so often acquiesced in them, that he felt he could make no excuse, and was left entirely to his mercy, and if he chose so to inflict them, the well-merited reproaches of his friend.

To his great surprise, however, Mr. Cecil immediately changed the subject, made no allusion whatever to what he had witnessed, and proceeded to give him a humorous and lively description of some adventures which had befallen him in Frankfort. Horace thanked him inwardly for his forbearance, for he felt that the influence which Mr. Cecil so fortunately exercised over him was quite sufficient to keep him from returning to the gambling-tables; and he resolved to reward him for his kindness, by abstaining altogether from them for the future.

Mr. Cecil had descried Horace as he entered the rooms in the act of staking his money; and, from his manner and expression, at once divined the whole circumstances of the case.

Being aware, from his knowledge of human nature, of the utter uselessness of argument, and determined, if possible, at once to check his young friend in his career, he wisely resolved to get him by stealth, as it were, out of the room, and when once thus caught, not to leave him again during the whole evening.

He inwardly resolved the next day to give him a severe "wiggling" on the subject, but considered it far better, for many reasons, not to allude sooner to the scene he had witnessed, which had given him much pain and uneasiness.

They had not been long in the air, when a heavy shower compelled them to seek shelter.

"Come, Grantham," said Mr. Cecil, "I have not half finished my story; let us go to your rooms, and I will indulge in an extra cigar this boisterous evening. What say you?"

"With all my heart," cried Horace, and he led the way to the hotel, where we must

leave them awhile to return to Curtis and Louise at the gaming-table.

"That spoony fellow, Grantham," stut-tered out Curtis, as he sat down by Louise, "has actually had the luck to win an enormous stake, and he has repaid me all he owes me. Here it is!" added he, rolling out the gold before him. "Here goes, Louise; just see me double it. Mr. Grantham," continued he, laying a stress on the *Mr.*, as if in derision of Horace's conduct when addressing him, "shall suffer to-night for his impudence to me, or my name isn't Dick Curtis!"

"Hold!" cried Louise, "you are too tipsy to play yourself. Give *me* the money. I will play for you."

"Devil a bit, fair lady," whispered he. "You shall play at *ecarté* with that brute, Grantham, afterwards. That will be a better thing for *you*, Louise."

She perfectly understood him.

Curtis now, with the desperation of a

drunken man, began playing enormously high. His usual caution entirely deserted him, and, notwithstanding the entreaties of Louise, and the evident run of luck against him, he continued madly, and without any calculation, to place large sums of gold on the losing colour, which were speedily swept into the coffers of the bank, which that night seemed fated to swallow up all the funds of the numerous players.

“Curse it!” roared Curtis, getting more and more excited.

“Silence! Monsieur; si vous plait,” said the *croupier*, looking at him, with that determined, though obliging voice, which these worthies invariably adopt on such occasions. “*Le jeu est fait.*”

Curtis lost again, and, heedless of entreaty, despatched Louise for the hundred Napoleons which Horace had given him the day before, having, in this short period, lost the whole of the money he had just received from him.

The fair messenger soon returned, and,

giving up both the money and her own fortune, for this was all the ready cash they now possessed, to her infuriated companion, she quietly reseated herself, to watch, with fearful anxiety, the issue of the game.

At first, the luck seemed about to change. Curtis won a large stake or two, got madly excited, stood up in his place, and attracted the observation of the whole room, by his frantic gestures and boisterous conversation.

With the determination of a practised gambler, he resolved, now that fortune seemed to smile on him, to leave his money down on the winning colour. Once he won, he let it stay, and won again, then imprudently—and notwithstanding the prayers of the gentle Louise, and the advice of a couple of his depraved associates, he insisted on doing so a third time, when, to his mortification and horror, the colour changed—he lost—and, on feeling in his pockets for money for a fresh stake, was thunderstruck to find that only a few solitary Napoleons jingled in his hand.

“It’s all up,” said he, subduing his anger (though his face sufficiently showed his rage and disappointment), “for to-night. But, by ——, he whispered to Louise, I’ll have it all back this very night from Grantham. I *will*, by ——,” repeated he, with his features actually distorted with passion. He insulted me to-night, Louise, and the villain shall pay for it.”

“Let us go instantly to his rooms. I know he carried off gold enough; though if that white-livered old gentleman, curse him, had let him alone, the fool would have lost it all again, as I have done.

Curtis seemed so carried away by his feelings of vindictive rage, and so thoroughly resolved on wreaking his vengeance on Horace, that Louise became quite powerless, and she, in vain, recommended care and moderation, for she perceived her paramour was so completely under the influence of liquor, that he would have his way, and both he and she must abide by the consequences.

In going through the refreshment rooms, Curtis called loudly for champagne, another glass or two of which beverage seemed alone wanting to render him furious. Indeed, what with the quantity he had drunk before and the evil passions roused in him by the great losses he had just sustained, he looked like a demon, and capable of perpetrating any wicked and criminal design. He raved and swore, as with Louise on his arm, they picked their way through the dripping streets to Horace's hotel. A light shone in the windows.

"There he is, curse him!" exclaimed Curtis.

"Mon Dieu," she replied, "be quiet or you will ruin all. If he remarks the state you are in, he will not touch a card."

"He *shall*, he *shall*!" vociferated Curtis, "or I'll shoot him on the spot. Don't fear, Louise," added he, as the thought flashed across him that he must, in some degree use caution, and that her injunctions were ne-

cessary enough, "I'm not half so drunk as I look, never fear!"

Why did he say "never fear"?

Because, reader, in passing the threshold of the door, he himself, as he neared the scene of action, felt fear creep over him, and villains always exhort their companions to courage when failing in spirit, as villains mostly do themselves—he paused.

It was but for a moment, for the last bottle of champagne now began to have its effects; and, to drown what little sense or caution yet remained to him—they reached the head of the stairs, knocked at Horace's door, entered, and discovered him seated on the sofa, in his dressing-gown, in earnest conversation with Mr. Cecil, the last man on earth whom Curtis, or his companion, wished to see, on such an occasion.

"Not alone," hiccupped Curtis, seating himself, and taking a cigar from the table, looking hard at Mr. Cecil, who did not move, but quietly went on smoking, as if nothing had occurred—"that's a d—d bore!"

continued Curtis, "for I've had such infernal luck. I'm cleared out of all the 'California' you gave me, I am, by ——, so Louise and myself came to drown our cares with you. Let's have some *ecarté*," continued he, fixing his eyes, as well as he could fix them on anything, on Horace, who had risen from his seat on their entrance, and had not yet moved from his standing position, seemingly petrified with disgust and annoyance at this unwelcome interruption.

"Mr. Curtis," at length said he, in a firm tone of voice, though a close listener would have detected a slight trembling of the words, which indicated that his naturally impetuous temper was highly roused, "you are not in a fit state to play, or anything else, I consider your present behaviour most ungentlemanly."

"What?" muttered Curtis.

"Most ungentlemanly, I repeat!" said Horace. .

"You say rightly, I am not alone, but

sir, understand me, as far as you are concerned, I wish to be, and that instantly."

"Curse it!" said Curtis, who had apparently lost all caution, and even sense of self-preservation, always dear to the low and unprincipled, you asked me to come and play at *ecarté*, and a game I *will* have."

"Beware!" replied Horace, who advanced a step towards him. "It is false, sir, you had no invitation, and, even if you consider you had one, I insist on you leaving the room this instant. I do not touch a card to-night!"

"Well, all I can say is," said Curtis, rising, "it's a d——d swindle ——!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before Horace, whose passions were fairly roused, and who had made up his mind at once what course to pursue, dealt him a terrific blow on the chest. Curtis endeavoured to parry, and return it. He missed his aim, and instantly received a left hander, from our hero full in the face, which caused

him to reel from one end of the apartment to the other, and then to fall heavily, the blood gushing from his nose.

Louise screamed, and, woman-like, flew at Horace, who now cool and collected, held her at arm's length, whilst Mr. Cecil just looked round, and then continued smoking, with an air of impenetrable reserve and wonderful *sang froid*.

The rascal, Curtis, though all but annihilated by the blow, rose quickly, and, with savage energy, thus addressed the enemy:—

“D—— you, you coward! I'll have satisfaction, sir; name your friend. By G—— we'll have it out to-night.”

“He is here,” said a calm voice from the arm-chair, and Mr. Cecil slowly rose, puffed a volume of smoke from his mouth, and approached Curtis.

“Satisfaction, sir,” said he, eyeing that individual from head to foot—who seemed to quail under his searching look, and commanding aspect. “Satisfaction! You, sir,

talk of satisfaction to a gentleman—recollect sir, a gentleman—indeed,” repeated he, ironically.

The speaker bent his head towards the ear of Curtis, and whispered something—the effect of which, whatever the words might be, was instantaneous and crushing—for the sharper started, turned pale, and did not reply. He indeed perfectly understood what had been addressed to him by Mr. Cecil, as thoroughly crest-fallen and discomfited he looked again savagely, and, with a horrible desire of vengeance on our hero, who had been a breathless spectator of the scene. Curtis was now perfectly sober, though in a miserable state of mental agitation.

“Sir,” said Horace, addressing him, “Mr. Cecil is my friend. You have received the reward of your behaviour; and I beg you will act in any way you may think proper.”

“Don’t trouble yourself, Grantham,” said Mr. Cecil, carelessly. “I think I can dis-

pose of this *gentleman* without your assistance. In fact, I hope I have done so effectually already. We will now wish you good night."

Curtis said not a word. To the astonishment of Horace, his faculties seemed stunned, and his recent fury scattered to the winds, as, accompanied by Louise, and holding his handkerchief to his face, he sullenly sneaked from the apartment—a miserable object, a crest-fallen, disgraced, and worthless man.

Thus ended the memorable attack of Louise and Curtis on our friend Horace, illustrating clearly that sharpers, though very sharp, are not always *sharp enough*, and will, and do often, when they least expect it, receive their just reward.

"Grantham," resumed Mr. Cecil, as soon as they were alone, "you served him right, the rascal!" observed he, quietly. "I know him well!"

"What?" said Horace, with astonishment.

"I know the man perfectly," repeated his

friend; "and, what is more to the purpose, he knows that I do so, which he was not aware of previously."

"You surprise me much," continued Horace; "his name is Curtis."

"Ha, ha!—excellent," said Mr. Cecil, laughing, "not a bit of it, Grantham; his name is 'Watkins,' a thorough black-leg, and notoriously bad character. I merely whispered his real name to him, and hinted briefly at a scene I witnessed some years ago, in which he played a conspicuous part, and which, if indeed other evidence were wanting, would prevent the possibility of his meeting any gentleman, or demanding satisfaction from him. You did not give him much time for reflection after the word 'swindle' had passed his lips. Depend on it, Grantham, they'll both decamp before the morning."

"Do you mean, Mr. Cecil, that there will be no duel?" asked Horace.

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Cecil; "and I am very glad that the circumstances of the

case prevent the possibility of such a thing ; for, though our laws of honour, ridiculous enough in themselves, often render one necessary, in *this case* it is entirely out of the question—*Mais, nous verrons*. It is most fortunate, Grantham, that you paid him the money you owed him ; if you want more, command me, my young friend, and pay him this very night ! ”

Horace, deeply touched, stretched out his hand to Mr. Cecil, who shook it warmly.

“ I do owe him some few pounds,” he replied, “ but I have plenty of money at this moment.”

“ Enclose it to him,” quickly rejoined Mr. Cecil, “ these things are always best when instantly arranged.”

“ I will do so,” said Horace ; “ thank you very much for your kindness.”

He seated himself, made a calculation of their accounts, and having enclosed and sent the money to Curtis, Mr. Cecil, as it was now very late, took his leave, and departed alone to his hotel.

CHAPTER XVII.

It may be supposed that, after such a scene, Horace Grantham did not go to sleep very soon. He felt Mr. Cecil's kindness deeply, and it moved him the more, from his being so totally unaccustomed to meet with kindness and assistance, which, on this occasion had so opportunely intervened, and seemingly rescued him from both a disagreeable position, and dangerous intimacy, for he now felt that his acquaintance both with Curtis and Louise was at an end for ever.

This was a source of great gratification to

him, and he at last dropped asleep, notwithstanding his excited frame of mind, more pleased with himself, and anxious for the future than he had felt for some time, not the least soothing reflection being, that at such a crisis, he had been enabled to pay Curtis, and had a good sum in his own possession.

He awoke early, and, of course, proceeded to the hotel of Mr. Cecil, who welcomed him with a smiling countenance.

“Don’t say I am not a prophet,” he began, “they are off, as I said, and I only hope not left you their bill to pay, by way of a parting legacy. I have been much amused, for I saw the whole thing this morning. I was dressing early to go to the waters, when, on looking out of the window, I heard a carriage approach, which contained no less a personage than our friend, the Hon. Mr. Curtis (eh, Grantham?) and his companion! The unfortunate man’s head was bound up, and the window closed, but that did not prevent me recognising our ‘birds of passage,’ as I call these gentry, who are now

most likely snug on board the Rhine steamer, bound for Paris, or elsewhere, to commence fresh scenes of fraud and villany. However, I am heartily glad they are gone, and now sit down, pray, and tell me shortly how you became acquainted with such people; for, although I had noticed your intimacy, I am at a loss to understand how you could be so foolish to continue it so long."

"Did you never suspect them? for the woman is, I think, even worse than the man."

"Ah!" stammered Horace, "I fear I deserve more censure than you are likely to inflict, Mr. Cecil."

"Not at all," replied he; "I am only glad I have been able to rescue you from their clutches; and, my dear fellow, I shall only ask one reward from you for any service I have rendered you on the occasion."

"Name it," said Horace, with warmth.

"That you promise me never to play more in public or private, or, at least, to use your best exertions not to do so; for I

consider it unfair to bind a man by a strict promise, when under an obligation, for any purpose, however good the intention may be."

"I do—I do promise," said our hero, "and I cannot tell you how much I feel your kindness. Believe me, I have only been led into these errors by want of thought, and I repent them as sincerely as you can even wish."

"I believe you," returned Cecil; "but I am too well aware of the dread temptations of the gambling-table to wish to put your good resolutions to so severe a trial."

"I am now about to depart for Homburg, to meet my only son at Munich. Will you, Grantham, accompany me? for I feel a deep interest in your welfare, and am not a man to say so, if I did not mean it. So," added he, with his cunning smile, "if you can trust me, let us travel together, and we shall soon forget the annoyances and peccadilloes of your past career."

"Thank you—thank you a thousand

times," said Horace, with energy, grasping his hand, the tears almost coming to his eyes, as he compared the language and conduct of his friend to those of his own father, "I can never forget that you have saved me."

"Don't mention it," kindly replied this excellent man. "I consider it the bounden duty of every human being who has it in his power to befriend the erring, the unfortunate, nay, the lost themselves; and I have my reward already in the feeling manner with which you have responded to my admonitions, and accepted my proposals."

"I know of nothing," said Horace, quite overcome with his emotions, for he had an excellent heart, "that could have afforded me so much satisfaction. I agree with the greatest joy."

"Well done, my young friend," replied Mr. Cecil, "for I believe, though I am not an old man, a space of twenty-five years divides our ages. When shall we set off, then?"

“Oh,” continued Horace, “directly, if you like. I cannot tell you how anxious I am to quit this place.”

“Gently, gently,” said Cecil, who smiled at the zeal of Horace, “to-morrow let it be; and, if the fates are propitious, I trust we shall have a pleasant journey. I am happy myself, Grantham, for we go to meet my dear boy, and I am anxious to make you acquainted with each other. Now, away for preparation. You don’t want money, do you?”

“No, many thanks to you Mr. Cecil,” replied Horace.

They separated; Horace’s heart leaping for joy within him, whilst Mr. Cecil experienced that calm satisfaction, that inward peace, which a good man always feels, after the performance of a kind action, or in imparting consolation, hope, and proper guidance to his fellow creatures.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“My own dear boy,” repeated Horace, when he found himself alone, for this was the first time that Mr. Cecil had made any allusions to his family, or private affairs—“fortunate son in being blessed with such a father.” And he endeavoured to picture to himself the happy meeting to which Mr. Cecil evidently looked forward with such real pleasure. If he failed, let us not suppose, for an instant, that it was because Horace was deficient in feeling, or imagination, for had he not already given many proofs of a noble and affectionate disposi-

tion? But, because, unaccustomed as he was, and always had been, to the regards of a father, he could not understand the very natural, though, to him, unknown position of Mr. Cecil and his son.

As he reflected on these things, and the strange events which had lately occurred, Horace inwardly thanked his good fortune, for the turn affairs had taken, and the lessons he had received took deep root in his mind. He was much interested in Mr. Cecil, whose confidence and good-will he hoped he had secured, whilst his curiosity was excited to the highest pitch to know more of himself and family, and he resolved, on the first opportunity, to make him better acquainted with his own history, and to seek his guidance for the future.

They started early the next morning for Frankfort, only eight miles distant, where they intended to remain during the night. They dined at one o'clock at the Hotel de Russie, a magnificent building in the Ziel,

the principal street and one of the finest thoroughfares in Europe. The afternoon was spent in visiting the churches, the beautiful statue of Ariadne, by Danneker, the picture-gallery, and town hall; after which they walked round the very pretty promenade that encircles the place.

It was a beautiful evening; carriages filled with ladies, many of whom were Jewish, passed and re-passed constantly. A few equestrians (doing their best to imitate the English in seat, and the appointments of their horses) varied the scene; whilst crowds of honest burghers, and citizens with their wives and children, filled the pathway, gazing on the drive.

"What an animated scene!" said Mr. Cecil to Horace, "did you see that old lady pass in a yellow chariot just now? She herself looked asleep, her footman and coachman also, and, if you did not remark the fact that the vehicle actually moved, you might imagine that the very horses them-

selves partook of the somnalescent character which pervades the whole turn out."

Horace laughed heartily, as he inquired who this old lady was.

"Neither more nor less than 'The Queen of the Jews,' the mother, or grandmother, I am sure I forget which, of all the Rothschilds,*" replied Mr. Cecil. She is near a hundred years of age, and though possessed, of course, of wealth in abundance, she still lives in the Juden-Gasse, a wretchedly old, though singular and interesting sort of lane in the middle of the town—a wonderful instance of the force of habit on the mind."

"Very strange taste, certainly," replied Horace, "but she can be at no loss for society, for there seem to be an immense quantity of persons of her religion resident here."

"A vast number," said Mr. Cecil, "who, indeed, only lately are beginning to enjoy any sort of freedom, having been treated for ages with tyranny and oppression, a

* The old lady here alluded to, died about two years ago.

shocking example of the ill effects of religious persecution and intolerant zeal. But the Jews have triumphed over their oppressors, are enormously wealthy, and with great good taste, in my opinion, confine themselves very much to their own society and habits of life.

“I am not certain, but I believe, even at this period, the absurd regulations of the authorities in the place, do not admit a Jew to their reading-rooms or clubs, however great his talents, wealth, or private virtues may be, thus shutting themselves out, probably, from the society of many a worthy man, and robbing the community over which they preside, of an active and intelligent member, with a well-filled purse ever open, I have heard, to the wants of others, on proper occasions.”

“You surprise me much,” said Horace, “I thought such things had all disappeared in the age of tolerance in which we live.”

“It is, indeed, a rare case, and most fortunate that it is so ; for of all the victories

which the advancement of civilization, and the diffusion of knowledge have achieved, I consider the suppression of religious strife, and tolerance of opinion thereby established, as one of the greatest; for does not history clearly point out that it has been the source of terrible misfortunes to mankind, without one single benefit conferred? Religious warfare, whether carried on by means of armed force, or subtle controversy, I hold to be most criminal, as well as most absurd—criminal, because a religious war is but a name assumed to hide the designs of those who grasp at power, and absurd, because theological controversy, though it has raged for ages with unrelenting fury, and in some degree does so still, is in itself, from the nature of the subject, an absurdity, and a complete stumbling-block to a man of sound mind, an anxious inquirer for truth. In my humble opinion, we English have to thank this unmeaning war of words, these folios of logical divinity, for the numerous dissensions in our own church,

and, latterly, the seceders to Rome from it.

“The Germans do not seem to give themselves much inquietude on religious subjects, alluding, no doubt, to the scene before them,” said Horace, which, although it was Sunday, bore no resemblance to that day as kept in England; indeed, it wore here far more the appearance of a gala fête day, and was indeed a wonderful contrast to the eye of an Englishman.

“They do not,” replied Mr. Cecil, after a pause, “at least, not at all in the way of outward observance, or form. It is also positively certain that at the present period Deism, plain Deism, is the creed of all the men, with few exceptions, whilst a total want of what we consider the spiritual essence of religion, characterizes the women. They are, as a nation, a strange mixture, for although the reformed, or Lutheran religion (is the established form of worship throughout the North), an almost total disregard of its rites and ceremonies is everywhere to be observed. Yet their irreproachable domes-

tic life, and general moral behaviour, would lead one to believe, that they must have something or other to guide them in their duties of life.

“It cannot be their theologians, or modern philosophers, for of all metaphysicians, they are the most obscure and unsatisfactory, though they take great credit to themselves on this point, and gravely consider that we are ages behind them on the subject. I attribute it, on consideration, more to the unsophisticated habits of life, the education, and the far more equal and just distribution of property, than in England, for, there can be no doubt, that although they may be blamed for an appearance of outward disrespect to religion, their tolerance and charity to others is far, far more liberal than our own.”

“Certainly,” interrupted Horace; “from the little that I have seen, the mass of the people here look happy. Their enjoyments seem more equalized, and, though this is a commercial town, one does not notice that hurried, anxious, and care-worn manner, which is so remarkable in the inhabitants of

our great mercantile cities"—and he thought of his last visit to Glasgow.

"Politically speaking, no doubt," resumed Mr. Cecil, "the distribution of the country into so many principalities, or duchies, is a false step, and the present stir for a united Germany, in that sense, a move which I hope will eventually be crowned with success, though there seems little chance of such a finale at present. Yet I question much whether either the happiness or well-being of the people would be improved thereby. As it is, though there are, no doubt, many great abuses, which have been, however, materially lessened by the revolution of 1848, still the inhabitants of each duchy, as at present constituted, have a most direct appeal to the protection of, and claim a more homely interest in, their rulers than they could do under a new regime, which would necessarily limit the number of courts very considerably throughout the land.

The wealth of the princes—and many are

both wealthy, charitable, and just—is now far more equally distributed than it otherwise could be, and, though so many interests at work, at once are no doubt a bar to a united elevation of the country in the scale of nations, the mass of the people, I feel convinced, would not (particularly at first) benefit by the change.”

“It seems, indeed, a great experiment,” remarked Horace.

“Which we, clever as we are, Grantham,” added Mr. Cecil, laughing, “cannot decide on; for all I have said is indeed conjecture. But I have lived long in the country, and am perhaps from that circumstance entitled to at least an opinion.”

The two friends had now reached their hotel, and, after an early supper, took another ramble, and then retired to rest.

CHAPTER XIX.

As Mr. Cecil had promised to meet his son on a given day at Munich, he and Horace agreed to travel by rail-road, though under any other circumstances, both would have infinitely preferred, at that beautiful season of the year, to proceed by the Rhine.

Accordingly, they found themselves the next morning, comfortably seated in one of the second-class carriages, per rail, to Carlsruhe. Mr. Cecil was in high spirits, and talked of meeting his son, whom he had not seen for a year, with the greatest delight.

“A finer fellow, Grantham,” said he

“never lived. He has never given me a moment’s pain, and, thank God, though their poor mother is dead, both my children are blessings to me, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful. Cast out, as I am, through misfortune, from our natural position in the world, in retirement I enjoy, as a reward for these reverses, and the very great pains which I have taken in their education, the society of my children, whose love, and affection I have always endeavoured to secure—my daughter” and his face brightened, as he spoke, “is two years younger than John, who is twenty-one, and will shortly be able to speak for himself, Grantham, so we will say no more about him.”

The conversation now turned upon education. “I am aware,” began Mr. Cecil, “that many English parents consider what is called a fashionable education absolutely necessary for a young man, and I willingly allow that there are advantages connected with it, which cannot be obtained in any other way.

“I allude to that particular style, that unmistakeable bearing, which characterize an Eton or Harrow boy; and, also, to the fact, that at these schools, a youth makes friends of, and comes in contact with, the sons of all the aristocracy of the land—who are supposed, erroneously I think, to be of infinite service to him hereafter. As far as style and manner go, it is all very well, and, without them, according to Lord Chesterfield, no man can be supposed to get on well in the world. But I will only ask, what, in reality, is manner compared to matter, to solid information and useful knowledge? And of these I maintain that, unless a boy is by nature of a most persevering turn of mind, he stands but a small chance of acquiring much of either at our public schools, or colleges.

“I do not deny,” continued Mr. Cecil, “that, if a boy is naturally most studious and persevering, he has at Eton every facility and encouragement afforded him. Hard indeed, would it be, were it not so. It is

certainly all on the voluntary principle, however; and if a boy is idle, however great his talents may be, idle he remains, as, from the greater numbers at the school, and the system in general, it is difficult, if not impossible, for the master to devote that individual attention to the characteristics of each boy, which alone, in my opinion, enable a teacher to proceed with any chance of success in the guidance of youth; for it is self-evident that what is good for one boy is not so for another, and that different methods of action must be used, according to the character and constitution, to induce a love of thought, and a desire of knowledge.

“Independently of this, in my opinion, there are other innumerable objections to the Eton and Oxford systems of education. That eternal devotion to the classics in the present age, I consider, in the generality of cases, though I know I am open to general opposition on this point, both absurd and useless, wasting the powers of an industrious youth for the acquirement of languages,

which, unless he himself intends to become a preceptor in his turn, can really be of little or no practical use whatever, although, no doubt, no man can be said to be perfectly educated, or fitted to fill the highest positions, without a fair knowledge of the classics.

“ But taking the boys *en masse*, how many are there who rise to these eminences, or fill these situations; while, on the other hand, how many are there who leave these places with only a smattering of Greek and Latin, and are almost totally ignorant of the modern languages, perfectly so of history, mathematics, logic, or geography!

“ Besides, consider that the boy, who does (notwithstanding all these evils, and the temptations to idleness and dissipation, which abound to a shameful extent, and which ruin the health and morals of many irretrievably), prefer the paths of study, and distinguishes himself, would have done so anywhere—so that the school has nothing to boast of.”

“ But,” interrupted Horace, “ would you

exclude the classics altogether from your system?"

"No, certainly not," replied Mr. Cecil. "The Latin grammar should be the groundwork of all; but, after that, I would invariably watch the capabilities, and turn of mind of the boy, before forcing him to the acquirement and arduous study of two dead languages. The time engaged in this pursuit by the young is incalculable, and would, if properly applied, have given them a thorough knowledge of, at least, two of the modern languages, history, ancient and modern, geography, mathematics, &c. However useful Latin and Greek may be, nobody will, I suppose, say at the present day, that French, German, and Italian are not more so. Yet it is only lately, and I believe, owing to the excellent good sense of Prince Albert, that these studies have formed a part of our modern plan of education.

"Besides, I hold that there are few boys capable of taking in the immense amount of knowledge which is heaped upon them, and

the most absurd, unfair, irrational proceeding I ever heard of, is the system of committing to memory all that is construed at Eton.

“In the first place, it is an impossibility, and therefore unjust; secondly, a sap, as he is called, slaves himself to death and, with aching head, does perfectly commit eighty lines of Greek or Latin to memory—much pleased with himself, and deservedly so, he goes up, on the rotation system, to say his lesson, takes up the running, (as the phrase is), where the last boy left off, rapidly repeats three lines, the master approvingly nods his head, and he retires; he is followed by a dunce, who, without having attempted to learn a word, *reads* a line or two from under the desk, and gets dismissed in like manner—yet, how great the difference should be, and how discouraging and useless such a system!”

“Yes but,” said Horace, who being an Eton boy himself, was naturally sore at this most decided attack on that venerable insti-

tution, "it would be impossible to hear every boy the eighty lines."

"Certainly, and quite cruel, and useless, to expect they should learn them," returned Mr. Cecil, "the time and labour devoted to more useful pursuits, would be of much more service: besides, in the name of justice, if a boy does with slavish toil, learn his task, let him at least repeat it, so that praise may be given where praise is due!"

"A contrary course does seem unjust," said Horace.

"Most decidedly," replied Mr. Cecil: "as to the moral training, there is no sort of attempt at it in our public schools and universities; and, though I am not straight-laced on these subjects, and consider that the private character and future happiness of youth, are far more in the hands of their parents at home than any where else, I still object most decidedly to the holiday system at Eton, and the chapel attendance on those days. If, indeed, a ceremony be a sacred one, let it be sacred, and not an imposition,

which, owing to the extreme frequency of the services at Eton, they naturally become, and, instead of the mind of youth being trained to reverence and adoration, they are thus rendered too familiar, and the habit of entering church becomes so common with them, as to be looked on as nothing but a bore, a form of tedious and unmeaning import."

"You have certainly" said Horace, "stated your objections at large against Eton; I should like to hear what you have to say against our universities."

"Though I am, I dare say, not well qualified to judge," replied Mr. Cecil, "it seems to me that the same glaring faults and improprieties, with loss of valuable time, are there visible enough. You are well aware that with many, university education is an absolute farce, that no attempt of the kind is enforced by the authorities, and that though many eminent men have appeared from Oxford and Cambridge, many thousands have left them ignorant, dis-

sipated, and absolutely ruined in health of body and peace of mind before they attain their majority.

“These scenes, this horrid precocity of youth in England, characterize not only our public schools and universities, but society at large; and I consider it one of the first duties of a father, whilst he uses his best endeavours to give his son a solid and useful amount of information, that he should direct his exertions even at the expense of his being thought ignorant and backward, to steer him clear of those allurements to vice, and that acquaintance with evil, which come, alas, only too soon to all.”

“I am most anxious to hear,” said Horace, after a pause, “how you educated your son?”

“My children, had the misfortune” continued Mr. Cecil, to lose their mother when they were young. I say a misfortune, for she was a person in every way qualified to perform the duties of her station, and had the tenderest affection for them. Such a

loss can never be replaced, but it was God's will that it should be so, and I resolved, at the moment of her death, that whilst I would, if possible, render them, if not learned, at least well-informed, I would never forget her injunctions, to make them good and amiable; and with that object constantly in view, they have both been principally educated at home: although John spent two years at Lubeck in the north of Germany, at the university there, this step I had no reason to regret. My daughter, my dear Amy, I have never left since her mother's death, for a day, until the present time, when I was ordered to drink the waters at Homburg, and she could not accompany me. You can guess, then, Grantham, how anxious I am to get home again, and now I think of it," added he, "I have never told you where that home is".

"No," replied Horace, "though I have often wished to ask you".

"Well," said Mr. Cecil, smiling, "you shall not be disappointed; but tell me, Gran-

tham, what do you expect? a palace in a town, or a large château in the country,—for I have not resided in Great Britain for two years”.

“I hardly know,” began Horace,—

“Nay,” said Mr. Cecil, “do not guess—you talk of going to Vienna—you shall visit us, *en route*; and, believe me, that whatever description of abode you will meet with, the inmates will receive their father’s guest with a hearty welcome”.

“How very kind of you!” returned Horace, “I am delighted with your proposal, and kind invitation”——

“Are you fond of fishing?” inquired Mr. Cecil.

“Very,” was the reply.

“Then,” rejoined his friend, “I can find you some very good sport, amid the most lovely scenery in the world.”

“Charming!” replied Horace, who already pictured to himself a scene, in which, of course he invested the fair Amy, (as he thought she must be divine) with the principal rôle. “I am a pretty good hand at it,

and have killed a salmon or two before now."

"There are no salmon near us," replied Mr. Cecil, "but, have you heard of the huchend, the monster of the deep in these parts?"

Horace answered in the negative.

Here the train stopped, so the description was deferred for another opportunity, and the subject was not resumed again that day. The travellers passed through Mannheim, and reached Carlsruhe without any impediment, whiling away the time with useful and instructive discourse.

CHAPTER XX.

THE next day the travellers resumed their journey. They proceeded in the eilwagen by Stuttgart and Ulm to Augsburg, where they slept at a small hotel called the "White Lamb,"—the host of which, "Herr Lang," was well known to Mr. Cecil as a first-rate fisherman, and owner of an excellent trout stream in the neighbourhood. He had formed this worthy's acquaintance some years back, when on the same route, and had been immediately captivated by the original

manner, kind heart, and jovial disposition of the man.

“Herr Lang” was a Tyrolean by birth, and had acquired a passion for the “gentle craft” (that is the noble art of fly-fishing, for he had been previously a devoted angler, according to the manner of his countrymen), from Mr. Cecil himself, who, on last quitting Augsburg had made him a present of a couple of well-filled fly-books and his favourite “Chevalier,” promising to return ere long and enjoy a day’s sport with him.

“Ach! Herr Cecil,” exclaimed a cheerful voice proceeding from a portly figure about six feet in height, which appeared at the door of the *hostelrie*, as the ponderous vehicle that contained the travellers pulled up at his house. “Weiss Gott, est freut mich herzlich sie wieder bei uns zu sehen, ist das Ihr Herr Sohn?”

“No, my worthy host” responded Mr. Cecil, jumping down, and shaking hands with his old acquaintance, “not my son,

but a great friend, and an ‘ausgezeichneter fischer,’ and as such I am sure he will be most welcome at the ‘Weisse Lamm.’ ”

“Das meine ich auch,” Herr Cecil rejoined. The Tyrolean, his face beaming with honest delight, as he respectfully saluted Horace.—Spreicht er Deutsch ?”

“Ein wenig,” answered Mr. Cecil, for our hero, whose stock of German was very limited, but who was already delighted with our new friend.

Having had their luggage carried to their apartments, which were simply furnished, but clean and comfortable, they proceeded to make anxious inquiries about the fishing.

Herr Lang’s conversation, for the most part, we shall transcribe in the English tongue ; although, for the benefit of such of our readers as understand German, it will be necessary, in order to preserve the originality of the man’s character, occasionally to let him speak in his own *vernacular*.

“Herr Lang !” cried Mr. Cecil, “it is now seven o’clock, we shall be ready for supper

in half an hour ; but, recollect my aversion to the 'salle.' Let us sup in your sanctum. I wish to show my friend your curiosities."

"Oh !" interrupted the host, "I have nothing. I am an old fellow you know, I can do nothing. It is only Englishmen who can fish, or do anything, ha, ha ! we shall see ;" and the cunning twinkle of his eye amply denoted that honest sarcasm and a full reliance on his own powers, formed two important elements of his character.

"I understand you, you satirical old fox," laughed Mr. Cecil. "I'll be bound to say that you have invented some new implement of destruction during my absence, which will throw all our vaunting London tackle into the shade. But go, and order supper, and don't forget the Montebello and Hermitage, and let us have some trout, 'blau-gesodden.' "

Herr Lang disappeared, laughing heartily, and was soon heard, in a stentorian voice, to issue various orders in the kitchen, evidently in a high state of excitement at our

friends' arrival! Before the half hour had well elapsed, supper was announced, and the travellers followed Herr Lang up a small flight of stairs, that led to the "sanctum" before alluded to, which was well worthy of description.

The room was small, and crowded with quaint old furniture; a large stove occupied a considerable space on the right hand, opposite to which was an immense press of the usual German construction, the door of which Herr Lang exultingly threw open, discovering to the astonished eyes of Horace a perfect arsenal of hooks, lines, reels, and devils, of all imaginable shapes and sizes; besides various other engines of destruction, many of them the invention of this extraordinary genius himself!

Over the table, on which the trout were temptingly laid, flanked by the rare old wines alluded to, swung a lamp of a peculiar construction, the great pride of our host, since it was so arranged, that, by means of a pivot, its light could be thrown into the most hidden recesses of this sporting den.

Various stuffed birds, all shot by the owner, fixed on wooden pedestals, or in glass-cases, graced the walls, whilst the corners of the apartment were blocked up with stands containing guns, fishing-rods, gaffs, and landing-nets.

“Well,” said, Horace, in the best German he could muster—“I never saw a more complete sporting crib, in or out of England.”

“I told you, you would be rather astonished,” replied Mr. Cecil, “but it would take days to examine all the wonders of this room.”

“Oh!” said Herr Lang, with a sort of half modest, yet dignified look—it’s not so bad—but the trout are getting cold,—will not the ‘Herren’ be seated?”

The attack now commenced in earnest. The host, as is the custom in Germany, on such occasions, took his place at the table, and played a very important part, both in the conversation, and in the consumption of

the very excellent supper the cook had produced.

“I see your Hermitage still keeps up its reputation,” said Mr. Cecil, as he conveyed a glass of this ruby-coloured wine to his lips.

“What does your friend think of it?” inquired Herr Lang.

“First-rate,” responded Horace, who seemed to enjoy the whole scene amazingly.

“What have we here?” cried Mr. Cecil, as the keller entered the room with a large dish in his hand.

“It is Rehrücken,” (chevreuil), answered Herr Lang, “and I think you will find it very good. It is not so easy as it was some years ago to get hold of a roe, thanks to the ‘Bauers,’ stupid louts, who have destroyed the best jagds far and wide. Thank Heaven, however, they cannot do much harm to the ‘Hühner,’—for there is not one in a hundred can shoot one on the wing, and there was not enough snow last winter to enable them to poach them to death.”

“Now for the ‘Montebello,’ said Mr. Cecil, extending his hand, and grasping the neck of the champagne bottle before him. “Horace, I drink success to our sport tomorrow in Herr Lang’s celebrated water, ‘the Brantelwein Bach!’ Now, Lang, what are our prospects in the fishing way?”

“Why,” exclaimed that worthy, smacking his lips, as he placed an empty glass on the table, “there are fish there, and fine fish also, by the Smithy. You remember, Herr Cecil—the still deep water—if we get a strong breeze, you may get hold of some two-pounders. I have not fished there myself this year. I always keep this pool for my friends; but it requires a good fisherman to do much there—unless the weather is very favourable.”

“Which I hope it may prove,” interrupted Horace, “but what is that peculiar-looking apparatus, bristling all over with hooks, above my head?”

“Ah!” cried Herr Lang, with a calm self-satisfied air, as he rose, and, removing

the tackle alluded to, placed it before them. "I made that for the 'hecht,' (pike), when they bite short—you see, it drove me mad when these 'luders,' (brutes) snatched my bait, held it, and then, in a moment, made their compliments and adieus, so I constructed these 'fly-hooks,' and fastened them two feet above the bait, with a bullet attached, so that, when they tried the game again, I give a violent jerk, and have caught them this way," added the speaker, puffing the smoke from his mouth, and offering Horace a cigar at the same moment, "in the back, the belly, nay, the tail itself—yes—I hold by this invention, much.

"I think," continued he, turning laughingly to Mr. Cecil, "it is not bad for a miserable Deutscher, ha! ha!"

"No, indeed," acquiesced Mr. Cecil, "but for Heaven's sake, remove the dangerous weapon, or you will be taking one of us for a pike on the occasion. But now Lang, let us settle the hour of starting, and retire to rest, for we are rather tired, and shall

require steady nerves to-morrow, so that we may perform creditably, under your searching observation.

“*I cannot fish!*” rejoined Herr Lang. “I am too rough, Herr Bischoff at Nymphenburg always tells me so. Besides, I have not got the English flies you know! ah! Herr Cecil, talking of tackle, have you brought me the *artificial duckling?*”

“What, you old blockhead! roared Mr. Cecil, in concert with Horace, *artificial what?*”

“The duckling you promised me, to be sure,” replied Herr Lang, gravely.

“Ah! I recollect now,” cried Mr. Cecil. “You wanted it for the pike in the ‘teich’ (pond), but I thought you were joking.”

“I suspect the live ducklings think it no joke, when they are swallowed by a colossal ‘Hecht,’” said the host. “I have repeatedly remarked it, and I do not see why a sham duckling should not be as good a bait as one of your ‘Archemedean’ of which I hope you have a good stock on hand. Besides,

the 'Herren Englander' can make anything."

"Well, Lang," continued Mr. Cecil, "I have no duck, but I have brought you some first rate flies, and minnow tackle."

"I am really most grateful, guter Herr Cecil," exclaimed the well-pleased landlord, rising from his seat, as he lighted the candles, and summoned the "kellner." "Suppose we settle to start at nine o'clock. It is only half an hour's drive with my old mare, and, as the weather promises to be cloudy," added he, opening the window and looking out on the night, "there is no necessity for very early operations."

"Well, Horace," said Mr. Cecil, as they bade each other good night at the door of their sleeping apartments, what is your opinion of Herr Lang?"

"Why," replied Horace, "I consider him a most amusing and original character, and I am certain he possesses a good heart."

"You will see him to-morrow completely in his element," added Mr. Cecil. "Plea-

sant dreams to you! You will find the beds clean and good, though the furniture may not be equal to that at the Clarendon, or Mivart's."

CHAPTER XXI.

AT seven o'clock the following morning, the travellers were aroused by the entrance of the housemaid, bearing for each gentleman, a huge wooden tub of cold water; for "Herr Lang," unlike the generality of his countrymen, fully appreciated the inherent love of Englishmen for matutinal ablutions.

Horace threw open the window of his room, and gazed out upon the narrow street—the air was soft and balmy—and, as far as he could judge, the wind was southerly. He dressed quickly, and entered the apart-

ment of Mr. Cecil, who was busy hauling on an immense pair of well-greased fishing-boots.

"Good morning, Cecil," said Horace, "you look as if you required some assistance, shall I ring for coffee?"

"Pray do," answered his friend, "what a fishing-morning! I anticipate rare sport. But where are your boots?"

"I have always waded without," was the reply.

"Ah! you are young," said Mr. Cecil, "but I can assure you I know of nothing more dangerous, and fatal to the preservation of health than such a practice. To-day, however, it does not much signify, for luckily there is no snow water in the stream we are about to fish, at this season of the year."

At this moment, the keller entered with breakfast, followed by our host, armed "cap-a-pie" for the fray. Over a pair of light trousers were drawn his gigantic red leather fishing-boots, with the flaps turned down

over the knee. A short fishing-jacket and waistcoat of the same material as the trousers, furnished with innumerable pockets, completed his costume, which, in truth, resembled more nearly the dress of an English farmer, or gamekeeper, than that of a German sportsman.

“Guten morgen, ‘Meine Herren;’ Staben die Herren gut geschlafen?” was his first exclamation.

Our friends responded simultaneously in the affirmative, as Herr Lang, with his characteristic bluntness, grasped both their hands with respectful freedom.

“Have you everything you wish for, gentlemen?” he continued, “I have no English tea, but Herr Cecil tells me that you cannot get a good cup of coffee in all England! Ah!” cried he—looking round—“that æsel (ass) has not brought the napkins!”

“*Napkins at breakfast?*” said Horace.

“Here you observe,” said Mr. Cecil, “that notwithstanding our boasted refinement,

we are behind even the much-belied Germans in some points of *table etiquette*.

“Warum bringst du keine servietten, Dummer Kerl!” shouted Herr Lang, as the ‘kellner’ re-appeared.

“Had not you better order the vehicle to be ready in a quarter of an hour?” said Mr. Cecil.

“As you please,” answered Lang, “*you* have to command.”

“We shall be ready by that time,” was the reply.

“Sehr wohl; sage dem *Anton*, er soll in Zehn Minuten Einspannen, und meine Frau, möchte zwei Flaschen Rothwein und etwas Kalten Brateu zusammen richten!”

“Well, I think that will do,” said Mr. Cecil, on overhearing the last order, “but let us take breakfast!”

Herr Lang now left them to complete his preparations, and at the appointed time, they seized their rods and fishing-tackle, and descended the stairs to the court-yard—where they found the vehicle waiting for

them. It was a double-seated phaeton—drawn by an old bay mare—standing close by Herr Lang was his fisherman, a heavy looking Bavarian, who saluted Mr. Cecil as they approached. This individual held the fishing butt, or “legel,” in his hand—for our readers must be informed that no German angler ever brings home dead fish, as no one, however poor he may be, will purchase one in that state, and, at that distance from the sea, trout and grayling, fetch high prices as articles of luxury for the table. At this juncture, Mr. Cecil drew Horace’s attention to the occupation of the host, who, standing stock-still in an erect position, was employed in gazing alternately at a small slate which he held in his hand, and at the various articles of fishing apparatus which lay thickly strewn around.

“*One—two — three — reel—rod—double-handed ditto—landing net—staff—shears—clearing ring — fly-books—spinning-tackle—bait—lunch—wine—mantle—knife.* Ah! all right!” exclaimed Herr Lang—giving his

slate with a settled air to the kellner, who stood by, in silent admiration of his glorious master.

The articles were now got on board the vehicle. Herr Lang lit his cigar, and, we are afraid, in not the most scientific manner, seized the ribbons. The old mare switched her tail, as Horace and his friend took their places. The former, as a stranger, occupied the post of honour in front, Mr. Cecil and the fisherman behind.

A few minutes' drive through the quaint old streets of this once-celebrated town, brought them to the gates, from whence they issued into a picturesque and fertile country. The blue mountains of the Bavarian highlands were just visible in the distance ; a light breeze stirred the leaves of the surrounding trees, and everything seemed to indicate a prosperous result. Horace was in high spirits, and burst out into a hearty laugh when Mr. Cecil turned round, pointed with comic gravity to our host's Tyrolean hat, which was dotted all over with small

bits of cork, in which his numerous flies and casts were securely fastened. Herr Lang remarked the movement, took off his hat, and looked at it superciliously.

“Yes, yes,” he cried, “I have seen so many gentlemen lose their flies, from having them carelessly fixed, that I make mine fast in this manner. I cannot afford to lose flies like you Englishmen, who go into a shop, and buy dozens, without asking the price. I have very few flies.”

“Ha! ha! ha!” roared Horace, who recollected the immense stock our host had displayed on the previous evening. “He always says that, Horace,” observed Mr. Cecil, “but here we are at the mill.”

“Now, gentlemen,” said Lang, “this is my fishing-lodge; pray alight.”

They did so, and quickly unpacked their things. Herr Lang, meanwhile, gave some directions to his attendant about his old mare, an especial favourite; and then, accompanied by our friends, strode heavily over a narrow plank, thrown across a part

of the stream, which, owing to the vicinity of the mill-wheel, was here exceedingly rapid.

“Gentlemen,” cried Lang, “I am not going to fish myself, therefore, pray say whether you would rather remain together, and fish the Brantel wein Bach, or will one of you go with my fisherman, and try the small stream, which joins this about ‘*an hour**’ lower down?”

Mr. Cecil declared that he would tackle the small stream, and join them at luncheon time at an appointed spot. He therefore departed, as he knew the road well, and left his friend under the care of the worthy Tyrolean. “Let us try the clear water above the mill,” he said, as the breeze freshened.

Horace, who was an excellent fisherman, soon got his tackle in order, and, having followed Herr Lang’s directions as to the selection of his flies, proceeded to the water-side. It was indeed of such unusual clearness, that Horace at once perceived nothing short

* Germanism.

of a combination of favourable weather and skilful fishing could avail.

“Come here, sir!” said Lang, “this is the best point for heavy fish I know of—throw a long line just where you see those weeds.”

Horace obeyed, and, at the second throw, rose and hooked a splendid trout.

“Das ist ein schöner, fisch! Take care, look out for the weeds!” exclaimed Herr Lang, much excited, as the trout, which was at least two pounds in weight, sprang violently three feet out of the water.

“By Jove! I never felt a trout pull in such a way in my life,” said Horace.

“No,” grinned Herr Lang; “it is a German trout. Your English trout are half tame, like your pheasants and partridges. Wind him up. Don’t let him have any more line, Herr Grantham. Ah! you have him. I see you are a cool hand. I am too rash; but I can fish a little.”

By this time, the trout was fairly landed, and Horace gazed admiringly at his prize,

which was speedily deposited in the "legel," before alluded to.

"Try again, sir!" said Lang, as he seated himself on the bank to watch Horace's method of casting, which, meeting with his approbation, was acknowledged by a succession of complacent nods and incoherent muttering. Another fish—but somewhat smaller—was soon added to the spoil. As they were unhooking him, a tremendous splash, about two yards to their right, caused them both to start, and gaze at each other.

"Herr Jesus! Did you see that rise?" said Lang. "I know that fish; he never comes up except in this sort of weather; but you must change your flies for him. He is at least four pounds. Put on a May-fly."

"What!" said Horace, "a *May-fly* in August!"

Herr Lang, not heeding this observation, took off his hat, and quickly twitched a fly of this description from the same, which he fastened as rapidly to our friend's casting-line.

"Come back a step or two, and throw quietly just under the bank," he continued; "he is close to the shore. Ah! there he is again. I don't like his movements. Throw above him!"

Horace obeyed—and, just as his fly reached the spot, a large circle on the water indicated that the monster had risen. He struck, quickly and hooked him, to all appearance, firmly. A tremendous salmon-like rush on the part of the fish instantly ensued, the rod bending almost double under his weight. Our hero's skill was now displayed most favourably, but we fear it would have proved unavailing, had he not been so admirably seconded by Herr Lang, who, screwing on another joint to his landing-net, reached over the weeds, which here extended about six feet from the bank, and, when the fish, after five minutes' play, appeared on the surface, made a sudden and dexterous dive, and caught him fast in the fatal meshes.

"Well done!" said Horace, quite delighted, "I never killed a finer fish."

“No,” answered Lang, “‘Das macht mir eine Freude. Herr Cecil wird sich grämen,’ he will not have one like this fellow—but the wind is falling—it is of no use stopping here longer, let us go to the ‘Scharfes Wasser’” (rapids). They went their way, and fished towards the appointed spot.

Horace was loud in his praises of the stream, the fish rose admirably, and, by the time they reached the foot bridge where the rendezvous was arranged—the “legel” was completely crammed. Mr. Cecil was here discovered in the very act of playing a large fish.

“Look at Herr Cecil!” cried Lang, “he has him, I declare—ah! he is a good fisher.” Notwithstanding the eulogy just passed, Mr. Cecil’s skill this time failed him—for, just as the host ceased speaking, the line was observed to slacken, and the rod to resume its natural position.

“Deuce take him,” cried Mr. Cecil, as they reached the spot. “Ach! das ist

Schade, guter Herr Cecil," said Lang "sie haben pech."

"I think it was my own fault," said Mr. Cecil, examining the cast, "no, by Jupiter, it is one of those horrible blue hooks, snapped in twain. I have sworn a thousand times never to use them: a 'Limerick' is the only hook to be depended on. I cannot conceive why these London makers will persist in sticking to the other description. Well Horace,—what sport?"

"Look in the water-butt, pray," replied Horace.

"Fish-butt, you mean, but perhaps with you *it is* ONLY a water-butt!" answered Mr. Cecil, "but, let us see. Ah, that is a beautiful fish—did you kill him yourself?"

"Ask Lang," said Horace.

The host thus appealed to answered in the affirmative, and then proceeded to examine the contents of Mr. Cecil's "legel," where, to his astonishment, he found a fish of nearly equal dimensions to the one Horace

had caught, besides numerous smaller gentry.

"Why where did you get hold of this fish, Herr Cecil?" he asked.

"You remember the old bridge?" was the reply. "I killed him there, and, if you examine his mouth, I think you will find him to be an old friend."

"Donner werter!" said Lang, as he took hold of the fish, and scanned him narrowly. "It is true, this is an old cast of mine; he broke away from me in May last, after I had played him ten minutes, but I cannot regret it, now that you have slain him."

Luncheon over, they resumed their sport, and returned home at seven o'clock in the evening, highly gratified.

Mr. Cecil gave directions to be called early the following morning; and, at nine o'clock, after taking leave of their jovial host, they departed, per railroad, to Munich, which they reached shortly after eleven o'clock.

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. CECIL'S first inquiries at the Golden Stag, were for his son. He had arrived from England, where he had been on a visit, and the *garçon* informed them, was absent, but always returned for the *table d'hôte* dinner at two o'clock.

"Let us go out and seek him," said his father. They, therefore, hastily chose their bedrooms, and left the Hotel; when Horace shortly perceived a young man approaching them, who, both, by his likeness to his father, and the smile of recognition visible

on his countenance, he had no difficulty in putting him down as John Cecil.

"Well, my dear fellow," said his father, stretching out his hand, which his son grasped in the most respectful, yet cordial manner, "I am right glad to see you again, none the worse for your journey, at least you don't look so, eh?"

"Never was better in my life, my dear father," replied John Cecil, "and you? I hope, really, to hear the Homberg waters have agreed with you, though," added he, with a playful smile, "I am sure it's all nonsense, and you only wanted an opportunity for giving us a bit of a fright. I could not believe it, when Amy wrote, and said you had left her to the tender care of Madame Leclerc."

"You are a nice sort of fellow," replied his father, "to commence the exercise of your quizzing faculties, before we have well shaken hands, but I'll pay you out my boy, when I get you out fishing, and you want me to tie a fly or two for you. In the mean

time, pray treat my friend, Mr. Horace Grantham, whom I now have the honour to introduce to John Cecil, Esq., with more deference."

Horace smiled, the young men bowed, and all proceeded towards the Hotel.

"John, my dear fellow," said his father, for that seemed his favourite way of addressing his son, "do you dine at two? If so, we will join you; and take a walk afterwards in the evening."

"I do," replied John Cecil, and he ordered two more covers to be laid instantly.

The bell soon rang for dinner, during which meal, Horace had full time to examine his new acquaintance, for, with proper politeness, he interfered very little in the conversation, feeling that Mr. Cecil and his son must necessarily have much to say to each other, after a separation of so many months.

John Cecil was very like his father, only much taller. He was at least six feet two inches in height, and proportionately well-made. His hair and eyes were light, but

well suited to his brilliant complexion, which denoted the enjoyment of perfect and robust health.

He wore large moustaches and whiskers, which became him well, and his good-natured and intelligent countenance was of that description, which, while it did not denote genius, or even great powers of mind, impressed the beholder with the conviction that honesty of purpose, great courage, and affection for his species, were the predominant characteristics of the man. But what delighted Horace the most, was to observe the intense gratification which the meeting he thus witnessed afforded to both father and son. On the one hand, there was none of that cool politeness, which one so often sees displayed on such occasions, whilst, on the other, there was a total absence of that cringing manner, and forced display of affection, which many think fit to assume. All here was natural, and, as they sat together, conversing and laughing, as they related their respective

adventures to each other, Horace thought of his own forlorn position, and inquiringly asked himself, what he had done to forfeit the high privilege of a father's love, affection, guidance, and friendship. After dinner, they started for a long walk in the environs of the town.

"I am glad you smoke Mr. Grantham," said John Cecil pulling out his cigar-case, "I am a great smoker, and my father, who you know is a philosopher, says, I abuse a privilege by overdoing it, which is I dare say true; but I have acquired the habit during the two last years, and find it difficult to be moderate."

"You smoke far too much, my young sir," said his father, but at this moment Grantham, I myself will keep you in countenance; so here goes," added he, lighting his own cigar from his son's, whose expression indicated a mirthful joy at thus catching the governor in his own trap, as it were.

"Moderation is the word, is it not father," said he, "in everything?"

This sort of harmless bandinage often went on between father and son, proving, that although it was evident, John Cecil had the utmost respect for his father, that father had not, by unnecessary harshness, and an unfeeling rule in childhood, either chilled the affections, or rendered himself an object of fear to his son.

Indeed, Mr. Cecil was yet so young and fresh a man, that in their daily intercourse they far more resembled brothers than anything else, and in our opinion, unless there is a very great disparity of years, or circumstances call forth acts of command on the one hand, and the duty of obedience on the other, this should be the footing of all; for nothing can be more certain than that, while of all positions, an undue familiarity between a father and son is most repulsive and objectionable; that coldness, or instinctive dread of each other, which too many possess, and which is decidedly the father's fault alone, is equally reprehensible and unnatural.

Putting aside natural affection altogether, which it is not only the duty, but in reality the interest of all fathers to cultivate in themselves towards their sons; how is a father to impart instruction, or cultivate the mind of youth, if that mind is alienated from him by his own cruelty and harshness? The task, no doubt, is difficult, but yet often overcome by men, who, like Mr. Cecil, resolve from the first moment to devote themselves to the duties in the state of life in which it has pleased God to place them, and to use their best endeavours, whilst they show by their own example, that they prefer the paths of virtue, wisdom, and moderation, to those of folly, dissipation, and vice, to make their sons both love, honour, and obey them.

“I am very happy to hear,” said John Cecil to Horace, “that you are coming to us *en route* for Vienna. The fishing is first rate, and although late in the season, I trust we shall have some rare sport, particularly with the grayling, which abound in our locality.

I have brought some new flies from England."

"Humbug!" cried his father.

"Hear him," said John, winking his eye at Horace.

"I'll bet you a new hat, my boy," continued Mr. Cecil, "that you don't kill half the fish with your flies that I do with my rough things.

"I think I can see you now, wading towards me imploringly, asking for a fly with such and such a body or wings, not being able to touch a fish with your own. Catch me giving you one, after insulting a man of my craft, by bringing me your London flies here!"

"Ha, ha!" roared his son. "Why you asked me to bring them yourself."

"Deuce a bit," said Mr. Cecil, laughing.

"Oh no, not at all," replied John, producing his memorandum book, and showing the commission there written in his father's handwriting, who, discomfited, shut it up quickly, with a comical air.

"It's a true bill," said he. "Well, I suppose I divined that Grantham was coming to see us, and would want tackle, for he tells me has none."

"Fortunately, we have plenty," interposed John, and, I must say, after a three months' smoky *séjour* in London, I look forward with the utmost delight to the sight of our lovely mountains and streams, and the luxury of breathing the heavenly air of the Tyrol."

"The prospect is charming, I confess," said Horace, "doubly so to me, for I have never visited that part of Europe, and have heard such enthusiastic accounts of the magnificent scenery."

"Impossible to be overdrawn," said Mr. Cecil, "but, as you will soon judge for yourself, any feeble attempt at description on our parts would be entirely useless."

"When do you propose to proceed?" said John Cecil to his father.

"To-morrow," replied the latter. "I am anxious to see my dear Amy again, for recollect, John, I never was apart from the

dear girl until now from the moment of her birth; and, had it not been that the medicos insisted on it, and I possessed full confidence in the kind friendship of Madame Leclerc, I could not have been induced to leave her, though in our quiet village, I verily believe, the most forlorn and unprotected female might live alone for months unmolested.

“She has, thank God, written me the most cheering accounts of her daily life, since we parted, but, Horace,” he added, in a feeling tone of voice, “when you are a father, you will understand my anxiety to get back home, however humble that home may be, when it contains a dear, an inexpressibly beloved and loving daughter.”

John Cecil looked at his father with an unmistakeable glance of reward for his manly and noble, though natural anxiety on the subject, dear alike to both of them, and Horace was much touched as he observed them, dropping slightly behind, and greet each other with a hearty shake of the

hand, as they commenced a low and earnest conversation together.

Our hero thought this a good opportunity for leaving father and son alone, so he quickened his steps.

They understood his delicacy, and did not recall him.

Horace rambled long and far. Confused visions of coming happiness, all connected with the Cecils, floated through his brain, the peaceful serenity of his countenance, indicating clearly that hope was bright within him, that a conquest had been achieved, for the time at least, over the evil passions of his nature, and that in the friendship of a man like Mr. Cecil, he had found that which he had so long needed, an object of interest, on whom he had already learned, with justice indeed, to look up to as one worthy of his best regards, and heartfelt gratitude: a kind companion, and true friend.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was on a fine evening in the month of October, in the year of which we treat, that the butler of Mr. Foster opened the door of the dining-room of the mansion of that gentleman, who now lived in one of the largest and most magnificent houses in the town of Glasgow, and informed him that the junior clerk, our old acquaintance, Jones, wished to speak to him for a moment. Mr. Foster was alone, although a vacant seat at the other end of the table, which was covered with decanters, and massive plate, indicated that his son, or some one

else, had not long left the apartment, which was spacious and gloomy, being furnished in that style which all our countrymen consider appropriate for a dining-room. The furniture was rich and heavy, and the paper of the room of a dark crimson, relieved only by a full-length ill-painted portrait of Foster over the sideboard, which was, with bad taste, much overloaded with silver.

It was just dusk, so that as Foster sat gloomily in his chair alone, his features were not visible, but, whatever his contemplations were, he was endeavouring to drown them in a large tumbler of whiskey-toddy that smoked before him, and which he evidently preferred to the rare wines which stood temptingly alongside.

“Who?” said he, in reply.

“Jones, from the works, sir.”

“Tell him I will see him to-morrow. To-night I am engaged,” answered his master.

The man shut the door, and retired.

Foster rose, rang for lights, and commenced pacing up and down the apartment, a sure sign, according to Lord Byron, that we inherit, or rather share, the natures of wild beasts, and thus show, when our evil spirits are aroused, the similitude. The thoughts of the wicked and prosperous Foster were not enviable—his countenance and firmly-knit eye-brows showed, however, that his determination had not deserted him, and that he was just as capable now, as ever, of any action which was necessary to suit his purpose, without the slightest regard of the immorality, or the effect on others, as long as his own cunning and wicked schemes for self-aggrandisement were successful.

“This man Jones,” thought he to himself, and his face assumed a diabolical expression of revenge and hatred, “must be settled somehow. The fool knows not his position, though I do; and also that he is totally and completely in my power. The man, curse him, seems incorruptible. Strange to say, money seems to have no effect on him, for

ever since the death of Macgregor, he has refused my assistance, and done nothing but pester me with what he calls 'his conscience.' Conscience," he repeated, half aloud, "why I have no conscience (was that true?) and here is a poor grovelling devil, with a wife and nine children, refuses money, and talks about nothing else. He is certainly *mad*—but something *must* be done—for I fear his communicating what he calls *his suspicions*, or the fears of his conscience, to the young man. Then, indeed, it might be disagreeable. The very fact of questioning my integrity might ruin the firm—it must be prevented at all hazards. Let me consider. What does this man know? What can he do to harm me? Nothing. Yet I fear him. I know not why."

Here Foster paused, and, in his soliloquy, the thought then struck him, that if Jones communicated to Horace his suspicions of foul play, inquiry would be set on foot—the papers and deeds, which passed muster so well at the funeral, would be re-produced,

and subjected to a strict investigation—and the fact which had escaped observation would then be detected; that, although Jones and the younger Foster had signed as witnesses, no one (but it was supposed by them, Mr. Foster or the lawyer) had seen Mr. Macgregor affix his signature to the fatal document. This fact alone, which now seemed hushed for ever, as he was in full possession of the business, money, &c., would cast suspicion on him; another search for a will would be made, and even, if nothing were discovered against him, this inquiry and sudden investigation would be most injurious and fatal to his character and position in life.

Jones *must* be silenced somehow. “Somehow,” he again repeated to himself; and he resumed his walk, often pausing, as if in earnest consideration of some daring scheme to avert the threatened danger; for true enough it was that the poor, weak, though honest man, Jones, had never, ever since his suspicions of foul play had been con-

firmed by the non-appearance of a will, and the entire wealth passing into the hands of Foster, taken a penny of money from him, though, owing to his extreme poverty and large family, he had never been able to repay the debt he owed Foster, and had with difficulty maintained his wretched wife and children. He still toiled, and would have been in all his misery, comparatively speaking happy, had he not always had the leaden weight of a disburthened conscience on his mind. Often, and often, he resolved to write to Horace, and communicate his suspicions; yet, when he tried to analyze what those suspicions amounted to, he could not sufficiently arrange them in any decided shape to warrant, in his opinion, an accusation of Mr. Foster.

All he knew, was, that he had signed the document, in Mr. Macfarlane's office, in presence of that gentleman and Foster, and that he felt he should not have done so, without more care, and though he had no doubt that Mr. Macgregor had signed it, as he himself

saw his name, as he wrote his own, he felt convinced there was foul play somewhere, and that it was his bounden duty to communicate his suspicions to Horace. In fact, he would have done so long ago, had he not been held back by his wife, who ridiculed the whole idea, and, though a kind, good woman, repeatedly blamed Jones for his folly in refusing the often proffered assistance of their patron, who, thinking to silence Jones for ever, never lost an opportunity of affording aid to the family, and, until he found him inexorable, treating him with crafty kindness, and a show of condescending friendship."

But, when Foster found that all his advances were of no avail, that Jones, though he shunned him as he would poison, in the daily affairs of life, took every opportunity of alluding to the circumstance of the funeral and death of Mr. Macgregor, the signing of the deed, and his inexpressible regret at having done so, the wicked man became alarmed, and now absolutely hated

and detested this poor Jones, as the only living mar-plot to his schemes, and cause of anxiety to him for the future.

It is here necessary to allude to a circumstance, which, in the first instance, had given rise to Jones's suspicions, and which was totally unknown to Foster. Some time before his death, Mr. Macgregor, who had suffered from a paralytic stroke, sent for Jones to his house in the country, and desired him, in his presence to copy out a will which he himself dictated. This was the very document now in the possession of Foster, and, though the non-appearance of it at the meeting after the funeral had greatly surprised Jones, it had equally mystified him, and prevented him from making any remarks on the subject. This may seem unnatural; but when the character of poor Jones is recollected, and his isolated position considered, it is not wonderful that he shrank from the responsibility of bringing so serious a charge against Foster, as the concealment of a will, as it was

also quite possible Mr. Macgregor might, from unknown motives, have destroyed it before his death. This consideration, however, it has been shown, was not sufficient, though it was enough to induce silence, to quell the apprehensions of foul play in Jones's mind, which thus tossed between doubt and fear, became every day, more and more confused, and less capable of forming any definite plan, by which justice might be done to Horace.

In this state, all that the poor man could do, was to brood silently over his share of the transaction, which, although not culpable, seemed sufficiently so in his eyes to render his life a burden to him. We allude to his having signed as a witness, the deed by which the property and business were conveyed to Foster, and which he sufficiently regretted, as has been clearly shown by his former conduct.

One day, when Jones had been indulging more than usual in his gloomy thoughts, he told his wife of his determination to

write anonymously to Horace, asking him to visit Glasgow, when he intended somehow or other to impart his suspicions to him.

The resolution was no sooner formed than acted on, and, as is always the case, under such circumstances, Jones felt relieved, as soon as he had dispatched the communication to Gmunden, having obtained the address from Mr. Grantham's butler in London, and he had called at Foster's residence on the very evening alluded to, for the express purpose of informing him what he had done, both to watch the manner in which the intelligence would be received, and to place Foster on his guard, which the honest man thought both just and necessary.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FOSTER's mind was ill at ease the next morning as he walked to the counting-house, for the old gig and horse had long since been discarded for a gaudy and handsome equipage, which, however, he seldom used, as the distance from his house to the place of business was not great.

A sense of coming evil, although it proceeded apparently from a quarter so little to be apprehended, as the poor weak Jones, haunted him; and, as he passed through the outer room to his sanctum before described, he felt nervous, irritable, and irreso-

lute. He resolved to rid himself of these emotions, as he was no coward at least in evil, by at once getting over his interview with Jones, who he glanced at as he passed on, and saw in his usual place, eyeing him with a look of anxious doubt. With that regularity, which habits of business give to all, he proceeded leisurely to open and read the huge packet of letters from all parts of the globe, which one of the clerks handed him; this over, he rang his bell, and, bracing his energies up for the task, desired the porter to usher Mr. Jones into his presence.

That individual knocked, and was admitted.

“Sit down, Jones,” said Foster cheerfully, “its rather cold this morning. I hope your wife und family are getting on better?”

“Only middling,” replied Jones, sorrowfully.

“Ah, well,” continued his patron, “You know they have a friend in myself, Jones; but you called at the house late last night,

so I thought you might want money. If so, Jones, speak, don't be afraid! what is it?"

"Sir," said Jones, whose honesty of purpose now came to his assistance, and rendered him almost courageous, "I want *no* money. Yet it was *about* money I wished to speak."

A pause of some moments now ensued—each eyed each other, the nerves of both being strung to the utmost pitch, yet fearful of commencing a subject which had always ended, when introduced, in scenes of violent contention and passionate strife. "Sir," at last said Jones, "I am resolved to speak out. I can't be comfortable in my mind, or know peace, when I think that Mr. Horace, God bless him, has not got his just rights!"

"What do you mean, Jones?" interrupted Foster, his voice hoarse with passion—"Rights—what rights, what, man? speak!"

"Well," said Jones, whose voice now trembled with fear and agitation, his natural weakness returning, owing to the violence

of Foster's manner—"I *must* speak, sooner or later, and *will* now!"

"Go on," said Foster, scornfully, "*his rights*, you said; what to?"

"To his grandfather's fortune," said Jones quickly.

This was coming to the point, and had Foster been aware that the half-crazed looking man, who sat trembling before him, was in possession of the knowledge, not only that the late Mr. Macgregor had made a will, but that it was favourable to Horace, his reply would have been very different. As it was, he considered himself on safe ground, and instantly resolved on what line of conduct to pursue.

"Very pretty, Mr. Jones," said he, "I recommend you, sir, to take care what you are about. I suppose you have never heard of imprisonment for false accusations, and defamation of character, and then what becomes of the wife and children, eh?"

Jones winced, and half regretted his rashness.

"But go on!" continued Foster, who, with diplomatic skill, was resolved to throw the onus of explanation entirely on the poor man, and commit himself with as few words as possible, "go on, Mr. Jones, only I advise you to take care what you *do* say, and recollect, that I acted, and act still, by the advice, and with the assistance of Mr. Macfarlane, one of the ablest advocates in Scotland, Jones."

"I pray you, sir," said Jones in a low voice, in reply, "not to understand me wrong. I make no accusations."

"Oh, indeed, the devil you don't!" loudly replied Foster, in an indignant tone, "no accusations, eh? then what do you want here?—to insult me?"

"No, sir, far from it," answered the poor man, who was now literally crushed with fear, as he remembered how weak his evidence, and how great the power and enmity of Foster was against him—"I only wished to tell you what I have done; though now I am sorry for it."

“*Done!*” roared Foster, his face turning pale with apprehension, which was not noticed by Jones, “*done*, sir—what *have* you *done*? speak quickly!”

“Only written to Mr. Horace, requesting him to come to Glasgow,” replied he.

It would be impossible to describe the effect these words produced on old Foster.

His suspicions already excited, he had anticipated evil of some sort, but this information, so totally unexpected, and fearfully dreaded, for a moment paralyzed his frame, and rendered him speechless.

The re-action soon took place, the blood rushed into his face, ears, and head, and his countenance assumed a diabolical expression of hatred and ferocity, mingled with fear and anxiety, as he thus addressed the terror-struck Jones:—

“You have, sir, then I’ll make you regret it to your dying day—you wretched man—for, had you not thus forced me to it, I had never let you know the secret which

binds you to me, and keeps you in my power *for ever ; for ever*, I repeat!"

Poor Jones knew not what was coming—a mist swam before his eyes, and he repented bitterly having moved an inch in the matter.

He stammered out something about "not too late, anonymous letter," which Foster paid no attention to, but was hastily employed, with trembling hands, in unlocking a large iron safe in the corner of the room, which mysterious coffer had never been known to be opened or shut, save by the rich man himself.

He soon produced a document, which our readers have heard of before—the deed—the fatal deed of 1843. This he slowly unrolled, and, eyeing his victim with a tiger's glance, spoke as follows:—

"You, sir, have written to Mr. Grantham—what about, you best know. You shall repent it. Do you recognise this deed?" continued the wretch, approaching Jones, who had now risen, and was supporting himself against the mantel-piece. "Do you know this deed?"

"Yes, too well," said he, in a voice scarcely audible.

"And that signature?" continued Foster, pointing to Jones's name.

"Yes."

"And *that*?" he added, alluding to Mr. Macgregor's. "Are you sure you know *that*, Jones?" and his voice rose, as if some terrible secret, some direful communication, was on the eve of being made manifest.

"Yes, sir," said Jones, "that is the late Mr. Macgregor's signature. I know it well."

"Are you sure, Jones?" repeated Foster, as the thoughts of revenge, sweet, though it carried ruin to himself with it, rushed through his frame.

"Certain, I could swear to it," was the reply.

"Then," said Foster, speaking slowly, and in a hollow voice, "you would swear to a lie—a lie—a false and infamous lie—Jones!"

"Sir, sir!" said the poor man, "what do

you say? what?" for his intellects were nearly gone, and he did not understand fully, though he half expected, the import of Foster's words.

"Collect yourself," replied that infamous person (for he wished the blow to fall with full effect on Jones, so that, through the influence of fear he might bind him to his views now for ever), "and hear aright."

"Mr. Macgregor never signed that document, but I, mark me; Jones, I signed it *for him*." These last words were said in a low whisper the speaker stretching his body towards Jones's ear, for that purpose.

"Sir, Mr. Foster," said Jones in agony. "What then, you forged his name?"

"I did," replied Foster, calmly, "and *you, Hector Jones*, witnessed it, *you, Hector Jones*, are a witness to a forgery! And I can swear, and will do so, if necessary, and so will my son, that you knew it to be a forgery when you did sign it—now Jones, perhaps you know why I have shown you all this—move but one step further in this business, and *we, we*, recollect Jones, shall

be all discovered, I and you, also, will be ruined. Say not a word, and discovery is impossible, and you are a made man, Jones—money shall be yours in plenty—poverty shall disappear from your hearth, and your children shall be cared for. But on the other hand (and his countenance assumed an expression of fearful determination, and resolute hatred), if you do not this moment give me a promise, or sign a paper to swear that you will never breathe a syllable to Horace Grantham, or mortal man, of all this, I will this day—nay this hour—arrest you for the debt you owe me, throw you into prison, and let your wife and family starve—now choose. I fear not your accusations (that was a deliberate falsehood), for who would listen to the stories, unsupported by evidence, of a raving debtor in his cell, but I do not choose my integrity (?) to be questioned, or my actions impeded by you, or any man on earth—choose, I repeat, and that quickly, no trifling!”

The unfortunate Jones's discomfiture was complete. He fancied himself ar-

rested for a debt, which he could never repay, and his wife and family turned on the street. His whole frame trembled, as this shocking picture came before him, his good resolutions wavered, and, in broken accents, he entreated Mr. Foster's pardon, and, though horrified at the criminality of the man, his fears, and knowledge that he was implicated in the forgery, rendered him powerless, and incapable of judging on the subject.

He saw only, alas, his immediate dangerous position, repented him of having written the letter, which he told Foster was an anonymous one, and swore positively, in satisfactory terms to him that, on Horace's arrival, which Foster judged would take place shortly, not a word or sign should escape his lips.

Having thus disposed of his immediate fears, Jones was about to depart, but Foster stopped him.

"Jones," he again began, "sign this paper instantly! It is only a promise on your part never to divulge what you have

this day heard. Do you suppose, man, that I am going to be such a blind fool as to let you depart without this safeguard for myself?"

Jones tremblingly signed the document; and, as he left the room, the unfortunate man, whose intentions on entering it were of the best description, felt, that he had allowed himself to be overpowered, and silenced for ever; and, worse still, made the confidant of a man guilty of the dreadful crime of forgery, by that man's skill, and wickedness, and unfortunate mastery over both his worldly position and feeble mind. Still the evil day was for the present put off, and, like many others, he, in some degree, removed the weight from his own mind by the doctrine of expediency, which, indeed, in his unfortunate and lamentable position, was, though not a sufficient, a very powerful excuse for his conduct.

When Foster was thus left alone, he returned the deed to the iron safe, which having carefully locked, he sat down, and

pondered long and deeply over the, to him, serious scene which was just over.

He thought over his long career, which would, indeed, as far as industry, and great perseverance go, have been creditable to him, though his conduct had been always marked by selfish grasping, and miser-like zeal in the acquisition of money, for money's sake alone; and he, in bitterness of spirit, asked himself now, in the solitude of his chamber, whether the high position which he had attained, purchased as it was, by the entire loss of self-respect, and an approving conscience, was worth the price he had paid for it.

Of all afflictions this must be the most galling, humiliating, and wretched, to those who have committed great crimes, either through the force of their passions, or with cool determination, but particularly the latter, when they find, which is certain eventually to be the case, that let their wicked schemes succeed as they may, the perpetrators cannot, owing to the loss of their

virtue, and their own approval (however worthy they may seem in the eyes of a mammon-loving world), enjoy either the position, which they have ruined their peace in this world, and their hopes of salvation in the next to obtain, or that which is infinitely better than any position, however exalted; namely, a clear conscience, and a peaceful mind.

Old Foster looked most miserable, and felt the force of this argument deeply, as, with his face resting on his hands, he sat for a full hour wrapped in contemplation. Though he felt gratified, as all scheming, and wicked men do, it cannot be denied, that he had succeeded in crushing Jones's conspiracy, for such he regarded it, against him, yet, the knowledge that successfully to do so, he had been obliged to acknowledge his crime, and share his own debasement with another, tore his heart with anguish and disappointment; while that feeling of security, which he possessed, as

long as he, *and he alone*, knew the fatal secret, was considerably diminished.

He consoled himself with the reflection that, come what may, Jones was in his power, as he rightly judged that poor, weak, honest creature in his wretched position, would never dare to breathe a word of the transaction to Horace, or any one else, after the explanations he had heard, and with the fear of cruel threats of vengeance which Foster had so clearly made, hanging over him. Still, that peace of mind, if peace it can be called, which even the wicked, comparatively speaking, feel, whilst secure, was gone for ever, and he half regretted that he had, in a hasty moment, confided the fact of the forgery to another, though that other was only the unwilling tool of his own evil passions, his slave and enemy in one, the unfortunate, and much to be pitied Jones! Foster's wife had died the year previously, his son James he seldom saw, as any authority he originally possessed was entirely gone, and the young man had, ever since

the death of Mr. Macgregor, and the consequent elevation of his father and himself in a pecuniary point of view, given himself up entirely, unchecked, to the indulgence of his natural propensities and evil habits.

He was now a confirmed drunkard, a low, dissipated, worthless character, the associate of profligates and prize-fighters, ruined apparently irretrievably in mind and body, a dreadful example to others, and a curse to himself, and his own father, who, with his grey hairs and sins upon his head, shuddered, as he recollected what his own acts had been, and what the character was, who was to succeed him ere many years, in his ill-acquired position, and dearly purchased wealth.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE following morning Mr. Cecil, having inquired of the valet-de-place at what hour the "Pinacothek" and "Glyphothek" were open, and ascertained that visitors were admitted until two o'clock daily, shortly before that hour they bent their steps towards the former.

The architectural beauties of Munich, and the treasures of painting and sculpture contained in its noble galleries, have been so often described by authors, more competent to do so than the writer of these pages, that our readers must be contented with a brief

survey of the same, accompanied now and then with a few remarks from Mr. Cecil, for whom we hope they have, by this time, acquired due respect.

Having entered the "Pinacothek," and sighed as they compared this simple, but chaste and noble structure, with our own "National Gallery," they (after contemplating several pictures by inferior masters), found their attention riveted, and stood spell-bound before those two magnificent efforts of Rubens' genius—"the Last Judgment," and "the Fall of the Damned." The latter, though a smaller picture, appeared chiefly to attract the attention of Mr. Cecil, who, after gazing at it attentively for some minutes, spoke as follows—

"I conceive that no one can ever form a just conception of the wonderful imaginative and inventive powers of 'Rubens,' until he has seen this picture. Observe the vast number of figures, the varied expression of each countenance, and the sublime and daring manner with which those groups of

writhing limbs appear to have been, as it were, hurled upon the canvass by the artist. What a power of pencil! what magnificent colouring."

"It is indeed a glorious picture," said Horace, "but certainly not a pleasing one."

"How can it be so, on such a subject?" was the reply. "But let me call your attention to that head in the right hand corner of the picture. That stony and rigid look of despair depicted on the ghastly features, is to me infinitely more indicative of eternal woe (if such a thing there be), than all the demons, fire-flakes, serpents and other horrors, which are crowded around it. You may be sure that a man of Rubens' genius *felt* this, and, although in compliance with the superstitious feelings of the age, he was obliged to portray "Hell" after the prevailing notions of such a place, individually this great master knew, to use the words in Byron's *Manfred*, that

"What I have done is done, I bear within,
A torture which could nothing gain from thine ;

The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripped of this, mortality derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorbed in sufferance, or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert—”

Mr. Cecil then proposed, as their time was short, that they should continue their tour around the gallery—and, after beholding with delight that beautiful painting of the Virgin Mary, by Guido Reni, and a “Holy Family,” by the hand of the immortal Raphael, they proceeded, through the side cabinets, containing master-pieces of the Dutch, Flemish, and other schools, to the grand staircase, which they descended, and bent their steps towards the “Glypthothek.”

Here Horace was forcibly struck by the lavish expenditure of marble in the halls, containing the statuary, and the magnificent effect of the whole building, both externally

and internally, which they examined, under the guidance of Mr. Cecil, with the care and attention it deserves.

The remarks of the latter were at once instructive and judicious, but it would exceed the limits or purpose of this work to relate his conversation at length. As they emerged from the building, they were greatly impressed with the unrivalled beauty, and chasteness of the architecture, and the justness of the proportions, so rarely found in modern buildings of this description. It was a clear day, so that the white outlines of this beautiful structure stood out in strong relief against the deep blue sky, producing on the cultured mind of Mr. Cecil, a grand and harmonious effect.

The building opposite, designed for the reception of "paintings by modern artists," was also visited by them, and was found to contain sufficient evidences of the high state of art then existing in Munich, under the munificent patronage of Louis of Bavaria, "the reigning King." Another day was

spent in hurriedly inspecting the sights of Munich, Mr. Cecil only regretting their time was so short, for there is no capital out of Italy, where the lover of art can find such food for investigation and enjoyment.

Mr. Cecil having found, on inquiry, that it made but little difference in price, where three persons were concerned, whether they travelled by the Eilwagen, or shared the expenses of a *voiturier*, decided upon the latter, as a more agreeable, though less expeditious mode of travelling.

At six o'clock in the morning, they accordingly found themselves, with lighted cigars, comfortably seated in an open vehicle of this class, drawn by a pair of tolerable horses, issuing from the Isar Thor, on their route to Salzburg. It was a beautiful morning, and the peaks of the distant mountains, so dear from association to two of the party, were distinctly visible. In Horace, this distant mountain-range created a strange and undefinable longing; he fancied, as he gazed, that it was somehow not

quite strange to him—though he then beheld them for the first time. He recollected having seen, in an old German book, an allusion to these unaccountable sensations, said to be produced by mountain-scenery; but had, at the time, rejected it as an idle fancy, as one of the many instances of German *schwärmeri*.

As they drew nearer, this feeling seemed to increase, his inmost soul yearned towards these rugged masses of granite, which now possessed for him an almost magnetic power of attraction.

“Why, Horace!” exclaimed John Cecil turning round from the box where he was seated, and accosting his new friend, “what are you mooning about? I declare neither you nor my father has uttered a word for the last two hours” (for the elder Mr. Cecil having remarked the pre-occupation of Horace, had forborne to disturb it).

“What do you think of the ‘Chiem See?’”

A turn in the road, at this moment,

brought them suddenly upon this magnificent sheet of water—the largest lake in Bavaria. They drove for about half an hour along its banks, and the wind, blowing rather freshly from the south-west, impelled the tiny billows, in some places, almost under the wheels of the carriage.

“What a splendid panorama!” said the elder Mr. Cecil, “the mountains, however, are not equal to *mine*. But what a day for fishing! If I were not so anxious to get back to my darling Amy, I should propose taking a boat, rowing over the ‘Frauen-Inzel,’ and spinning for the ‘Lach’s Forellen.’ They would even come up at the fly to-day.”

“I think some of these Irish flies I brought with me would astonish their weak minds,” broke in John Cecil.

“Stuff!” said his father, “I’ll back mine against them any day! But here we are at ‘Traun stein’—where, if my old friend at the ‘Golden Stag’ has not forgotten me,

we shall meet with a hearty welcome and a good dinner."

His expectations were not disappointed and, after partaking of some delicious trout caught in the river Traun (not to be confounded with that near Ischlo), by the landlord's son, and some "Backhändl," washed down by the far-famed Bavarian beer, they re-entered the carriage, and about seven o'clock in the evening, the citadel of Salzburg, perched on a lofty eminence in the centre of a plain, so verdant and beautiful as to bear the appearance of an English park, burst upon their view.

As the windings of the road caused the fort, as it were to change its position from time to time, the travellers were unanimous in their praises of the unrivalled beauty of its site. The sun was just setting behind the "Vatzmann," one of the loftiest mountains of the range, which, encircled the plain around the town, in almost every direction; and its parting glories, shed a succession of varied, but ever lovely tints on

this enchanting landscape. At one moment, the bare grey granite seemed bathed in crimson, then it grew fainter, fainter, and at last resumed its former stern and cheerless aspect.

Horace had never beheld any scenery half so beautiful, and became quite enthusiastic, so that, at last, John Cecil laughingly insisted, that they should leave him there, to find the best of his way to Salzburg on foot, which would besides give him an additional appetite for supper.

“Ah! here comes this horrible custom house!” exclaimed Mr. Cecil, as they neared a small house on the road side—where a huge bar with black and yellow stripes was suspended across the way—“Schwarz gelb, ay! the colour still exists, and I fear the party that owns it too!”

“These officials, however,” continued the speaker, “are in most cases civil, especially since a row I had with one of them last year at this very spot; the rascal insisted on my opening my portmanteau myself

though I handed him my keys for this purpose, and there were a dozen of his assistants standing by idle. On my refusal to comply with his command (for such it was), he told me that I was an 'ass,' and 'Konnte mich zum Teufel scheeren,' which I noted down very coolly and deliberately in my pocket-book, smoking my cigar all the time, and looking sternly at him!

"On reaching Salzburg, I called upon my friend, Count M——, who being high in authority, procured me ample satisfaction, for the individual in question was all but discharged from his post, and had to beg my pardon in the most abject terms, for his unpardonable rudeness."

"Ah!" laughed John Cecil, "you should have seen the governor taking down his name; it was the finest thing conceivable; but here we are, 'keys out.'"

As Mr. Cecil had prophesied, they met with little or no delay. The fishing-tackle was surveyed with a sort of dull gaze of wonder, as to what on earth those curious

looking wheels, poles, and lines could be intended for. In ten minutes, they were again *en route*, and a little before nine o'clock, descended at the "Drei Allirten," an inn patronised by Mr. Cecil in preference to the others, for two very good reasons:— firstly, because it was cheaper, and secondly, because it boasted a better *cuisine*.

"Tea and cutlets, and lots of them," was John Cecil's address to the *kellner*—who was accustomed to this young gentleman's vivacious manner.

"*So gleich*," was the reply.

The travellers having made themselves comfortable, sat down with a good appetite to their repast, which was excellent, and then proposed taking a stroll on the bridge, over the "Salza," which connects the suburbs and town of Salzburg. As they slowly paced up and down, they had ample leisure to admire afresh, the unequalled aspect of the citadel, which rose, with bold sublimity, above the town on the left bank of the river. It was a clear moonlight

night; and the travellers agreed, as they contemplated the fort on one hand, and the C—— berg, which formed an equally picturesque object, on the opposite side, and gazed up stream towards the mountains, along the rich-wooded banks of the Salza, with here and there, the turrets of some chateau visible among the trees, that the scene must possess charms indeed, which could rival in beauty the one before them.

Horace Grantham, as his glance wandered from the rushing stream at his feet, where the countless stars were reflected in a wavering and uncertain manner, to those lights themselves, as motionless to the eye of man, they shone each in their allotted position, with the same calm but glorious lustre which they had worn since Creation's dawn, felt his thoughts irresistibly reverting from the fleeting and evanescent nature of earthly grandeur to the power and majesty of the Great Creator of the universe!

“Ha! what is that?” exclaimed Mr. Cecil, as the sound of a chorus of many voices

without any accompaniment, broke the silence of the night. "It is the 'Ach! Velche Lust' from the *Fidelio* of the immortal Beethoven! Hush—listen attentively, let us not lose a note, and thus mar the effect of this grand composition.

The singers were skilful musicians, and, as the swelling notes gradually reached their climax, it seemed impossible for the human mind to conceive anything more sublimely truthful than the effect produced.

"Ah! it is indeed magnificent," said Horace, as the chorus ceased. "No composer ever fathomed the hidden depths of the heart like Beethoven. In that chorus, the inestimable blessing of breathing the free air—in fact, of *freedom* itself, is conveyed in a language above the power of words."

"But we must not forget," rejoined Mr. Cecil, "that the *spirit* of another great master of his art haunts this spot; I allude to Mozart, whose birthplace you are aware it is. They are doubtless now united in those realms where an eternal harmony for ever reigns."

They now turned their steps to the hotel, and retired to rest, having given orders to be called early on the following day, when they proceeded by the same conveyance on their route to E——.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MADAME LE CLERC's cottage was situated about a mile from the small village of E——, that lay at the southern extremity of the Gmunden Lake. The ascent to her abode was made by a tolerably good carriage way, conducted through a deep ravine, at the bottom of which a mountain torrent, the outlet of the two lakes about to be described, rushed along with headlong violence.

She had chosen her present residence on account of the unrivalled beauty and calm seclusion of the spot. The house belonged to an Alpine farmer, and, though it bore the

humble name of cottage, was roomy and convenient. The owners, who had no children, consisting only of the peasant and his wife, still occupied the apartments upon the ground floor. The old lady had hired the rooms above for a term of years, and furnished them herself in a comfortable, if not elegant manner.

In the winter months, Madame Le Clerc had previously often visited some friend in Linz; but since the arrival of the Cecils in the neighbourhood, she had never left the cottage, which was situated in a grassy knoll, backed by a thick wood, and thus protected from the inclemency of the weather—a beautiful green field, or “Alp,” stretching from the door towards the rushing stream, extended on the opposite bank for about three hundred yards, where it was bounded by a belt of lofty pine trees, above the tops of which the snow-clad peaks of the Hohenberge were distinctly visible.

The residence occupied by the Cecils had been originally destined as a shooting-lodge

for the imperial family—these mountains affording the best chamois chase in the neighbourhood.

It was with some difficulty that Mr. Cecil obtained permission from the authorities to become a tenant of the same, although it had of late years been totally deserted, with the exception of an old Jager and his family, who occupied it during the summer months. A new shooting-lodge had, however, been lately erected, by the orders of the Emperor, in a spot deemed more convenient, so that Mr. Cecil at last attained his object, and had been in possession for the last two years, having bought simple furniture at Gmunden, which was, however, amply sufficient, for John Cecil was possessed of great talents in the mechanical and turning line, and the fair fingers of Amy had furnished innumerable covers and cushions for the embellishment of her brother's handiwork. She was also an artist, and the walls of their sitting-room, or as Amy wilfully called it, *her room*, were covered with water-coloured sketches of the

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surrounding scenery. It was the constant subject of harmless dispute between the old lady and Amy, as to which of their residences merited the highest eulogium in point of beauty, of situation, &c.

Madame Le Clerc brought forward her "Torrent" and "Rustic Bridge," whilst Amy contended that nothing could equal in loveliness her charming abode, situated as it was, on a gentle slope of verdant grass, at the further end of a small lake, surrounded on every side by the luxuriant foliage of the forest trees; for, to such of our readers as have visited these districts, it must be well known that there is no mountainous country in Europe, where vegetation is to be met with at so great an altitude.

This lake was about an English mile in circumference, and Mr. Cecil had hired the fishing in this and another one, of somewhat larger dimensions, at no great distance. For the first year, he had strictly preserved them both, much to the astonishment of the Tyroleans, who think it all fair and above board,

not only to slay every fish they can meet with, by any means, but also to continue their laudable exertions all the year round, by which arrangement the possibility of a stock of fish growing to any size is effectually precluded.

He had moreover, since he remarked that the water of the first lake was more favourable to the rapid growth of the fish than the second, made a practice of conveying, from time to time, the greater part of the spoil caught in the latter to the waters of the former—where they rapidly attained considerable bulk.

There were also in the second lake some immense fish, but, as is always the case, these gentry were exceedingly capricious, and in consequence, rarely killed. “Char” moreover, abounded in both lakes, but they likewise did not thrive so well in the one as in the other, and required removal, accordingly.

Mr. Cecil and his son, the former of whom was a great botanist, found in the beauti-

ful and various "flora" of these regions ample scope for investigation and inquiry, and, after a year spent in collecting from the forests and steepest heights in the neighbourhood numerous and rare specimens of the same, they had commenced the construction of a garden, which, under the fostering care of Amy, had thriven apace, and formed a charming appendage to their already picturesque seclusion.

In this spot the Cecils had resided for two years, contented, and consequently happy, though fortune had not smiled propitiously in former days on their career; for, previously, they had been in far better circumstances, and accustomed to all that luxurious display and empty glitter, that unmeaning round of fashionable frivolity, which characterizes the lives of but too many English families, and which, if carried to an undue extent, without the corrective power of a refined taste, or well-informed mind, gains at last a total ascendancy over the individuals, rendering them eventually incapable of self-

exertion, nay, even of the very enjoyment of life, if robbed, through misfortune or otherwise, of those fancied pleasures, which habit, and habit alone, has rendered necessary to their existence.

Can this argument be too strongly urged? Is it not, alas! too true that there are thousands who, hardened by prosperity, become not only dead to the privileges they enjoy, and to the performance of the duties which such a position entails on them, but also allow themselves, by degrees, to become so wedded to a life of ease and self-enjoyment in crowded towns, that they insensibly lose the power of a just appreciation of the glorious works of nature, and, consequently, of that exaltation of the mind, that adoration of the Divine power, which is the sure reward of, and always felt by, those, who shake off the trammels imposed upon them by fashion, and a worship of the world, and seek their enjoyment in the more legitimate and natural resources of a country life, where serenity, if not happiness, is sure to accompany them?

Amy Cecil, and her kind friend, Madame Le Clerc, each were seated at work, one lovely morning, in the small drawing-room appertaining to the cottage of the latter.

It was excessively hot, though not more than eleven o'clock: the windows were all open, and the Venetian blinds closed, so as to darken the apartment, yet the piercing sun penetrated through the very walls of the building, which being partly of wood, was not very well calculated to resist its powerful influence.

The old lady moved not a muscle, but continued intently stitching at her everlasting embroidery, occasionally looking up at her young friend, who, clad in a loose robe of white muslin, and reclining at full length on a sofa near the window, looked like some lovely apparition dropped from the realms above, excepting that she was engaged in the mundane occupation of knitting a purse, which she had nearly finished. In fact, her taper fingers were fixing on the rings and tassels, whilst her countenance

indicated that satisfaction, which even, in so trifling a thing as the finishing of a purse, is the reward of the industrious.

At length, she gave a long sigh. Whether this sigh resulted from the heat of the weather, from fatigue, or from any inward emotion, we do not know, so leave to our readers to guess. However, she *did* sigh, then, with a graceful motion, half rose from her reclining position, and, holding the purse aloft, thus addressed Madame.

“Look, Madame Le Clerc, look at my purse—you know it is for dear papa,—I told you the other day why I made it for him.”

“Did you, my dear?” replied the old lady, regarding her most affectionately, “I must plead guilty to having forgotten all about it.”

“Then,” said Amy, with a smile, “I will punish you by relating it again. The morning papa left home, I was so dreadfully overcome with grief, that I hardly recollect anything, except that, he jokingly remarked to me, to keep up my spirits, that

he should want a new purse to hold all the money he should win at Homburg."

"What, my dear?" said the old lady, startled. "You can't mean that Mr. Cecil plays at those horrid places?"

"Ah, that is a good joke, my dear Madame; papa detests gambling—it was all his fun,—but they were the last words he said to me, and I have had a great deal of happiness, whilst working the purse, as it recalled to me the tones of his voice, and somehow rendered him though in reality absent, not so completely severed from me, as if I had employed myself in pursuits, not in any way connected with him."

"Ah, yes," replied the lady, "I understand, my dear, you are a kind, good girl, that is certain, let me look at your purse!"

"There!" cried Amy, throwing it playfully across the small apartment, into the old lady's lap; "it is too hot to move—I feel to-day as if I should dissolve, and the only chance one has of not doing so, is to remain perfectly still."

So saying, this lovely creature resumed her position on the sofa; pushed back her magnificent dark hair from her pale, high forehead, closed her eyes, and remained for a long period silently wrapped in her own contemplations. Whilst she is enjoying them, let us endeavour to describe her.

Amy Cecil was nineteen years of age—much above the middle height in reality, though, owing to the faultless symmetry of her figure, she did not appear so.

It is usual to grant the indulgence to a heroine of perfection in something. For Amy we shall with truth claim it on the score of her figure, which possessed that rounded elegance, that nameless grace, rare as it is beautiful; the admiration of connoisseurs and poets, and the envy of her own sex. Her head was small, and sat with swan-like grace upon her exquisitely-shaped neck. Her eyes, of that peculiar hazel grey colour possessed and so highly eulogized by the author of "Childe Harold"—were fringed by long dark lashes, and wore by turns an animated

or melancholy expression, according to the sensations she experienced. Her nose just escaped the severity of the Grecian model ; whilst her mouth, though too large for what is termed perfection, was beautifully shaped, and her ruby lips, when opened, disclosed teeth of pearly whiteness.

But no words can convey an adequate description of the (may we be pardoned for using a German expression, since there is no word in English to convey our meaning), “Weiblichkeit,” which pervaded the whole being, and breathed in every look and gesture of our heroine. Of this lovely creature’s character we shall now say not a word, but let it speak for itself in the following pages—

“She was a form of life and light,
That seen became a part of sight,
And rose, where’er I turned mine eye,
The morning star of memory.”

GIAOUR.

Madame Le Clerc’s servant just at this

moment entered the apartment, and handed Amy a letter.

She started slightly, and the blood rushed to her face, as she quickly tore it open, saying—

“Actually a letter from papa. It must mention this time when he returns home. Yes, dear Madame Le Clerc, give me joy,” she soon added, rising from the sofa, and walking slowly across the room, still reading the letter, for she was not one of those sentimental young ladies who cannot possibly restrain the outward signification of their feelings, and think it necessary, if they are gratified, to show it, by upsetting a work-table or some other article, whether of ornament or use. “Dear papa, and John, whom he met at Munich, will be here to-day or to-morrow—what happiness! I shall go home directly, although it is so hot, to get all ready for them. Will you accompany me?”

“No, child,” said Madame, in reply, “I cannot stir out till sun-set; besides, my dear, what have you to prepare? Everything at your home is in perfect readiness. Do re-

main quietly here, my darling, for to-day at least, as I am so soon to lose you."

"My dear Madame Le Clerc," said Amy, stooping down to kiss the old lady, "do not think I can ever forget your kindness, or cease to love you. But I have really to order something; for recollect that we have one spare bed-room in our magnificent *chateau*," and here she laughed merrily, "which papa wants to be ready for a friend of his, who is coming with him to fish," he says.

"Oh!" said the old lady, who liked news, as all people do who live much secluded from the world; "a gentleman. What about him. Is he an Englishman?"

"Oh, I don't know," replied Amy, sitting down again, though evidently anxious to get out of the room to read her letter, which she could not thoroughly enjoy unless alone. "He is no doubt some old college friend of papa's. It is rather odd, though, for we have never seen a soul since we have lived here till now, which is almost two years.

I will read what dear papa says about this strange man ; and leave you, my dear friend, to form your own conclusions." She then read aloud, as follows, the following extract : — " A friend of mine, Mr. Horace Grantham, is coming to stay with us a few days, *en route* to Vienna. So pray get the *Gothic apartment* ready."

" Ha, ha ! that you know is one of dear papa's jokes. I know what he alludes to perfectly. When we were rich, and lived in the castle in Wales, there was the 'gothic apartment,' and a great many others besides, so now he calls our only spare room after it, in memory of the past."

" Well, dear, is that all about the stranger?" said the old lady.

" Yes, to be sure," replied the fair Amy, " quite enough I think, is it not? as I hope and trust they will all be here to-morrow or the next day. I really must go now. Will you permit Frederica to accompany me to the cottage?"

" Certainly, my love, and you will return

here to take me my walk in the cool of the evening. Will you not?" said Madame Le Clerc, rising, to assist Amy in tying on her bonnet, &c.

"That I will: it will be delightful after this dreadfully hot day. Besides, how pleasing our anticipations for the morrow!" replied Amy.

"Do not be too sanguine," said Madame Le Clerc, as she kissed her young friend, who, full of joy, and escorted by Frederica, and a large Newfoundland dog, called "Hero," which belonged to her brother, took her leave, and walked slowly home by the shady pathway through the ravine which separated the cottages from each other.

"Madame Le Clerc watched them from the window, until they gradually disappeared from her view, and then returned to her work. This old lady, was of an aristocratic French family, and, although sixty years of age, still retained the activity and spirits of youth.

Her family had been all but extirpated, being staunch Royalists, in the days of the

Revolution : she had outlived the rest, and, about three years previously, had come to the country she now inhabited, and rented the rooms we now find her in occupation of, as she said to "end her days in peace." The faithful servant, Frederica, a German girl, was her only attendant, and, until the arrival of the Cecils, Madame Le Clerc had spent her time in almost complete seclusion. Although her income was small, her wants were moderate, and her establishment was conducted so economically, that the good lady always had plenty of spare guildens for the poor and unfortunate ; so that, whilst she herself was rarely seen beyond the precincts of her cottage and small garden, of which she was very fond, her benevolent acts were well known, and she enjoyed, in consequence, the respect and love of the humble peasants around her.

Madame Le Clerc had been beautiful, and her countenance still retained traces of her early charms ; for age, though it steals the roses from all, tracing the smooth com-

plexion with deep furrows, silvering the hair, and changing in every way, as he advances, with slow but certain steps, the features which have been the pride of friends, and the objects of anxious care to the individual, cannot, and does not, rob the benevolent and pure-minded of that sweet expression, that unmistakeable nobleness of manner, without which age in either sex, loses its chief charms, and fails to excite (which it should always be the attribute of advanced life to command) our veneration and regard. Madame Le Clerc was a Catholic; a pious woman without bigotry, charitable, and humane. She was highly accomplished, and well-informed, and Mr. Cecil, on making her acquaintance, which he did shortly after his arrival at Gmunden seized with delight the opportunity thus afforded him of cultivating her friendship.

The whole family were delighted with her; and, before long, the intimacy ripened into a real and lasting regard.

Amy Cecil loved the old lady almost as a

mother, and her gentle companionship and dutiful affection often, as Madame Le Clerc said, compensated her for the loss of a beloved daughter, which she had sustained years ago.

Thrown, as Amy was, without any companion of her own sex, in this secluded spot, she thanked her good fortune in this happy meeting with one so qualified in every way to be her friend and guardian, whilst her father, each succeeding hour, confirming him in his good opinion of the aged lady, rejoiced to see that, before they had been settled six months, a mutual attachment and fond love existed between them.

Amy spent much of her time at the cottage of Madame Le Clerc, who, on her part, declared that their arrival had given her again the feelings of youth. She accompanied them on many of their excursions; and oft was to be seen trudging merrily along the narrow path which divided the residences from each other.

Mr. Cecil had not hesitated to avail him-

self on his departure for Homburg of her kind offer to protect Amy during his absence, and he had left his child in her charge, with a perfect confidence in her safety and welfare.

The kind old lady was indeed a second mother to Amy Cecil, and now that the time approached when she was to return to her father's roof, Madame Le Clerc felt, for the first time, how dear the lovely girl was to her, and acknowledged, with a sigh, the pain with which she should part from one who had become much endeared to her, both from association, and a just appreciation of her virtues, and many sterling qualities.

She had observed with pain that her young friend, though cheerful and contented, had her moments of abstraction and indifference, and that an expression, as if of sudden pain, frequently shot across her lovely features. Intuitively, with a woman's tact, the old lady settled herself in the belief that Amy had been unfortunate in love; but, as she never alluded to anything of the sort, or

made advances of a confidential nature, on the subject, Madame Le Clerc was too well bred to force her to any explanation, trusting that all-powerful remedy, time, would heal the wounds which had been inflicted, and restore her dear child to a more perfect state of repose and happiness.

She, therefore, kept her suspicions to herself, though she watched Amy narrowly, resolving to guide and befriend her, should circumstances occur to make her better acquainted with the causes of that mysterious grief, and apparently unnatural melancholy, which was so often visible, particularly when they were alone; for it was remarkable that, in her father's presence, the gentle girl strove, and often successfully, to hide her agitation, and resume those spirits, which it is the blest privilege of youth, if unclouded by misfortune, to enjoy.

In a few hours, Amy returned to her kind friend. It was a beautiful picture to behold, as the sun's last rays dipped on the horizon, tinging the landscape with its parting hues,

the old lady, leaning on the arm of the beautiful girl, issuing from the door, and winding their steps slowly up the steep ascent behind the cottage.

They soon gained a rustic bench, which John Cecil had manufactured for their use and seated themselves to enjoy the magnificent prospect, which lay stretched, far and wide, beneath them!

"What an evening," said Madame Le Clerc, "and how beautiful the landscape! How superior are the works of the Creator of the universe, as thus beheld in their lasting-grandeur, to the perishable, though intelligent endeavours of our fellow creatures in mechanical advancement, and scientific pursuits!"

"Yes," replied Amy, "I have always loved the country. It is impossible to enjoy the same feeling of contentment and repose in crowded towns, where the mind is occupied with frivolous pursuits, or idle amusements. How happy it makes me to think that my dear father and John will return to-

morrow! Fancy, my dear Madame Le Clerc, this time to-morrow we shall *certainly* all be on this spot together!"

"*Most likely*, my dear," returned the lady, "but remember that, in this world nothing is certain; nay, we are surrounded on all sides by doubts, dangers, and difficulties, and it is therefore our duty to be grateful to God for any happiness he vouchsafes to us; whilst, on the other hand, we prepare ourselves to bear disappointment with resignation, and fortify our minds for the trials and miseries which, though often long deferred, are sure to be the lot of humanity, and bring us all at last to the closing scene of death, and deliverance from our earthly hopes, fears, and sufferings."

"You should not talk of disappointment this evening," replied Amy, playfully, though fully impressed with the truth of the remarks of her companion, "to-night I am resolved to revel in the full enjoyment of delightful hope, for it would really be unlucky, if anything occurred to prevent their arrival."

“It would, indeed,” replied the old lady, pleased to see that Amy’s melancholy had given way to a delightful and animated state of mind, consequent on the expected arrivals. “Therefore, my dear child, I shall rejoice heartily with you ; and, though I lose you much against my will, I pardon your impatience, when I consider how good, how kind, and noble a father you possess, and who, I have no doubt, looks forward as anxiously as you do to your happy meeting with each other !”

“Yes,” said Amy, “I love him dearly. I never recollect his speaking a harsh word to me, whilst he has always endeavoured to guide me in the way I should go, with gentle treatment and kind advice.”

“It is a blessing for you both,” continued Madame Le Clerc, “that you have such a parent ; it is a glorious privilege which few possess ; and it gratifies me much to find that both yourself and your brother appreciate your father’s excellence, and reward him with that love, attachment, and obe-

dience, which his care of you so richly deserves."

"Oh yes," added Amy, warmly, "my dear brother loves him as I do, and, though we both know that he has been unfortunate, and that we are rendered poor in consequence, John knows that whatever is left appertains to them both, and that my father would share his last shilling, or divide his only crust of bread, with his son."

I have often had occasion to admire the respectful manner, though perfectly free from constraint, with which your brother caresses his father," continued Madame Le Clerc. "It has always seemed to me the foundation of the footing which a son and father should be on, and which one so rarely meets with. Mr. Cecil is at once his parent, friend, and companion, his guide in difficulty, the preceptor of his ways, his intelligent tutor, and ready assistant in his sports and pleasures. I never see them together that I do not feel refreshed by the sight; it gives me, though a rare example

a better opinion of human nature, and I congratulate myself that I am fortunate enough in my old age to obtain the regards and friendship of a family, whose conduct I consider an example to all, and whose society it is impossible to cultivate without feelings of respect and admiration."

Madame Le Clerc spoke feelingly; Amy's eyes filled with tears, as she warmly pressed the old lady's hand, and reminded her it was time to proceed home. They rose and sauntered slowly on their way, and, after partaking of the evening meal, bade each other a fond good night, and retired to rest, filled with pleasing thoughts of the morrow.

END OF VOL. I.









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Horece Grantham or The neglected son.



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